THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

Notes of Recent Exposition

In the October number of The Expository Times Professor Jeremias of Göttingen wrote an article on the Bridge Saying attributed in Muhammadan sources to Jesus. Arresting as this *logion* is, he did not think it genuine, because it did not strike an eschatological note. This argument from silence is hardly, by itself, conclusive. But it raised the question, How many of these *Agrapha* of Jesus does modern scholarship deem genuine, and why? A slim volume just published, *Unknown Sayings of Jesus*,[1] gives us Jeremias' answer. In the *HDB* J. H. Ropes judged the number of genuine *Agrapha* to be ten. Jeremias doubles that number and adds one—twenty-one. Let us consider some of the things he says.

The sources from which the *Agrapha* come are, in effect, three: (1) The New Testament itself, and its manuscripts; (2) The writings of Early Church Fathers like Justin, Origen and Clement of Alexandria; and (3) The sands of Egypt, especially at Oxyrhynchus, which have yielded several new *logia* written on papyrus.

What are the criteria of authenticity? Roughly speaking, two. (1) External Evidence: We must be sure that the source which cites the *Agraphon* is early and reliable. (If we find several such early and reliable sources quoting an *Agraphon* as an utterance of Jesus, we may be surer still.) (2) Internal Evidence: The Saying must be broadly consonant, in style and content, with the mind of Jesus as we know it from the canonical Gospels. (Traces of Semitism in the Greek of the *Agraphon* may point to a Palestinian provenance for the Saying in question.) If the Saying is at sharp variance with the mind of Jesus in the Gospels, we must be very suspicious. Thus, to take an example, we know from St. Luke particularly something of the tender chivalry of the Lord towards women and the regard in which He held them. When therefore we find an ascetical sect in Egypt who took a poor view of marriage, crediting Christ with the saying: 'I came to destroy the works of the female,' we can hardly be blamed for scepticism.

So much for sources and authenticity in general. Now let us look at some of the genuine *Agrapha*.

[1] S.P.C.K.; 10s. net.

Space will not allow us to quote in full the story, found in an Oxyrhynchus papyrus, of Jesus' controversy about purity with a chief priest named Levi. The scene was the Inner Court of the Temple. Levi the priest took it upon himself to rebuke Jesus and His disciples for not washing their feet before entering the holy place. Jesus said: 'Are you then clean?' 'Yes, for I have bathed in David's Pool and changed my clothes.' This, says Jesus, is no purity at all. As if bathing in ordinary water could really make a man clean before God! The foulest of men might lie night and day in such water and be as foul as before. It is only his body that Levi has cleansed. Even loose women, says Jesus, do this in the pursuit of vice. But He and His disciples have bathed in the water of life and belong to the new, pure world of God. The Saying thus goes right to the heart of what it means to be pure before God. In the sight of men we may pass for clean, when inwardly we are rotten through and through. The only real purity is that of those whose hearts have been washed clean by the grace of God.

Better known is the story about the man who worked on the Sabbath. It survives in one of our old MSS of the New Testament, Codex Bezae. There, at Lk 6^5, some scribe has scribbled in a story which he knew about Jesus and which has all the marks of genuineness about it: 'On the same day, seeing a man working on the Sabbath, Jesus said to him: Man, if thou knowest what thou doest, blessed art thou; but if thou knowest not, thou art accursed and a transgressor of the law.' To understand this story, we need, of course, to remember how strictly the Scribes and Pharisees kept the Sabbath. Jesus in the course of His travels comes upon a flagrant offender, or so it might appear. Some have thought the man was doing agricultural work. Jeremias thinks it likelier he was engaged on some labour of love. Jesus accosts him: 'If you know what you are doing—that is, if you have realized why I do not hesitate to break the Sabbath in order to heal suffering humanity—if you know that for God's children the commandment of love takes precedence over all others, then you are blessed, you are on the way to salvation. But if thou knowest not—that is, if this working of yours is mere impudence

and frivolity, you are guilty before God and must take the consequences.' Is not this story completely 'in character'? Does it not entirely fit Him who claimed to be Lord of the Sabbath?

These two stories belong to the longer *Agrapha*. Most of them, however, are much shorter and more epigrammatic. Three of these deal with discipleship and deserve quotation. The first stresses its cost. We remember how in the canonical Gospels Jesus is always at pains to warn off those who light-heartedly profess their willingness to follow Him. So it is in this Unfamiliar Saying which Origen has preserved for us:

> He that is near me
> Is near the fire:
> But he that is far from me
> Is far from the Kingdom.

Obviously some one had volunteered to follow Jesus. Think well what you are doing, says Jesus, for to be near Me is to be near the fire—the fire of suffering and tribulation. It is dangerous to be with Jesus—you may end up on a gibbet or a martyr's pyre! Would you then turn back, as the Rich Young Ruler did? Ah, then, Jesus replies, you would be missing the Kingdom of God. The fire is only a way—the way through to the glory of God.

Yet, though the Lord can thus be stern with all light-hearted candidates for discipleship, He can also cheer His men with words full of hope and confidence. So it is in the Oxyrhynchus *logion* which begins familiarly:

'For he who is not against you is for you'

and goes on, unfamiliarly:

'*He that stands far off to-day will to-morrow be with you.*'

It is a Dominical *Nil Desperandum*. The opponents of to-day may be the disciples of to-morrow. A few years after it was spoken, it was to find remarkable fulfilment when one, Saul of Tarsus, His bitterest opponent, was to become His most dynamic and intrepid apostle.

The *Agraphon* addressed to disciples which is most quoted by the early Fathers, so that its genuineness is beyond dispute, runs:

'Show yourselves tried money-changers'

or, in its fuller form:

'Show yourselves tried money-changers, who reject much but retain what is good.'

St. Paul's words in 1 Th $5^{21f.}$ read like a reference to it. What does it mean? When a money-changer (and there were plenty of them plying their trade in Jerusalem at Passover time) had his doubt about a coin offered him, he would let it fall on a glass-covered table, and the sound it made would tell him at once whether it was good or bad money. When Jesus spoke this *Agraphon*, He was probably warning His disciples against the seductions of false prophets. 'Don't be deceived,' He warns them, 'learn from the money-changers, and acquire a sharp eye for all that is counterfeit.' The saying has not lost its cogency for Christians to-day.

Another *Agraphon*, preserved by Origen and Clement of Alexandria, has to do with prayer and resembles Mt 6^{33}:

> 'Ask for the big things,
> And the little shall be added unto you.
> Ask for the heavenly things,
> And the earthly shall be added unto you.'

It is a summons to 'think bigly' when we get upon our knees. When you pray, Jesus says, put first things first—God's business rather than your own. If you do this God will not forget you. The perfect example is, of course, the Lord's Prayer where we are bidden to pray first for the hallowing of God's name, the coming of His Kingdom and the doing of His will, and only when we have done this, may we ask provision, pardon and protection for ourselves.

Love is the most distinctive thing in the Design for living which Jesus gave His disciples. We are not therefore surprised that one of the *Agrapha*, which Jerome tells us stood in the lost Gospel according to the Hebrews, beautifully enforces the law of love:

> 'Never be joyful
> Except when you look on your brother with love.'

A true disciple can only be happy when every barrier of ill-feeling between himself and his brother is down.

But perhaps the most frequently quoted of all the *Agrapha* is the Oxyrhynchus *logion* which deals with the blessedness of work:

> 'Raise the stone,
> And thou shalt find me.
> Cleave the wood,
> And there am I.'

Note the two kinds of work mentioned—lifting stones and splitting wood. They may well be accounted the dreariest kind of drudgery and the least spiritual. No, says Jesus, for My disciples

even such drudgery can be transfigured. To the toiler who believes in Him He promises His presence. Even such drudgery may be lustred by a hidden glory, by the unseen companionship of the Saviour. And when that happens, the daily round may become a Divine service.

We have said enough to show the quality of this new discussion of the Unknown Sayings of Jesus. The older workers in this field were, for the most part, content to argue for or against the authenticity of various sayings. Professor JEREMIAS is not, and his elucidation of the religious content of the twenty-one Sayings he accounts genuine will make many preachers want to preach a series of sermons on these forgotten gems.

On 2nd December 1942 in a squash court near the centre of Chicago men achieved the first self-sustaining chain reaction and thereby initiated the controlled release of atomic energy. This is the event that Professor C. A. COULSON regards as the beginning of the atomic age rather than that morning in early August 1945, when the stillness of dawn at Hiroshima was shattered by the dropping of the first atomic bomb, or that later date in 1956 when Calder Hall was opened and electrical energy from nuclear sources began to flow into our national electricity grid. He chooses Chicago rather than Hiroshima or Calder Hall not only because of its priority, but because it points both to the neutral quality of these discoveries in themselves and by implication, to our responsibility for the uses to which we apply them.

We make no apology for turning again to the dicta of Professor COULSON. To fullness of knowledge he adds Christian conviction, and to the conclusions of a sensitive mind he brings an enviable power of lucid exposition. We know no more sure-footed guide through the complexities of the science-religion question in the new form in which the atomic age presents it to-day; and thus we turn with expectation to his Scott Lidgett Memorial Lecture just published—*Some Problems of the Atomic Age*.[1]

Beginning with the gloomy side of the picture, we find Professor COULSON seriously concerned about the irresponsible way in which politicians and publicists, yes, even writers in religious papers, are treating the question to what extent the testing of nuclear weapons is endangering the health of this and of future generations. It is true that, while some of the facts in this sphere are beyond dispute, there are others less clear, and that scientists of standing do not all speak with the same voice. On the other hand, the area of their disagreement is comparatively small and it is highly misleading for publicists to justify the continuance of bomb testing by quoting scientific statements of the present degree of contamination without adding the vital fact that, in the case of the type of bomb that was dropped at Hiroshima, the products of the explosion go very high into the atmosphere and the fall-out of fine dust may continue for ten or a dozen years. There is good authority for the opinion that, even if no more bombs are exploded, the concentration of poisonous bomb products will increase on the earth and reach the danger level in the 1970's. The damage that may already have been done will never be susceptible of assessment, for the atoms carry no label of origin, and no individual will ever be sure that he or she is the victim of radio-strontium. One may be sure, however, that if deaths from leukæmia and cancer of the bone increase, more and more troubled men and women will surmise that the disease would not have come upon them in any case, but that they are the victims of the criminal folly of their elders. In the atomic age, when the penalties of error are so much more severe than formerly, it is essential that the community be honestly and fully informed of the risks that are being run. 'If indeed our situation is like this,' says COULSON, 'surely the men of God can speak, however silent be the men of this world. Ought not the men of God to cry: Halt, and think? I believe they should.'

If the dangers of the new age are devastating, what of its exciting creative possibilities? In medicine the same type of radio-isotope which, in the case of radio-strontium can be so dangerous, can also be turned to beneficial ends. Radio-arsenic and radio-iodine have been used to locate brain tumours: with radio-iron we can diagnose diseases of the bone marrow. Again, the mutations induced by radioactivity, so dangerous for the human race, can be made creative for plant and vegetable life, and new forms of cereal crops have already been produced in this way. Even more thrilling are the vast projects on a continental scale which begin to appear possible. One expert has spoken of distilling fresh water from the salt water of the sea and using atomic power to pump it inland to irrigate the barren Central and Northern Territories of Australia; while another has estimated that with such irrigation Australia could develop more arable land than America and might even come to hold a population of two hundred millions. Is it surprising that some of the scientists and larger industrialists of our day seem to be animated by a confidence and a faith that match the scale on

[1] Epworth Press; 3s. 6d. net.

which for the realization of such projects they must think and act ?

These possibilities may seem at the moment far off ; but we cannot long afford to let them remain so. Atomic energy properly used is rapidly becoming an essential for the continuance of our civilization. In 1950 the world was using power ten times as fast as in 1850, and it is estimated that in the year 2000, if the population of the world continues to increase at anything like its present rate, and if the under-developed countries attain the degree of industrialization which their leaders clearly have in mind, then we shall need power at least twenty times as much as to-day. Where can it be found ? There is not sufficient coal and oil in the earth to meet that need. Other sources of power—say the harnessing of the energy of the sun—may become available, but meantime there is no foreseeable future for civilization except in the development of atomic energy. It appears that, in the good Providence of God, the secret of the controlled release of atomic energy has been discovered just in time for nuclear power to take over the part hitherto played by the rapidly diminishing conventional fuels.

Since 1942, however, the scientists have been worried lest the new knowledge should be used, not for maximum human good, but for utter devastation. It is rare, says Professor COULSON, for any group of scientists to meet together for more than a day without the social responsibilities that flow from their work being discussed, either formally or informally. That is all to the good ; but what is more questionable is the deep distrust of science and scientists which has infected the ordinary man. Nation wide surveys among the upper age groups in U.S.A. schools have revealed a definite prejudice against scientists, and instances of the same trend are not unknown in Britain. The scientist is not only dethroned, he is a man under suspicion.

In these new and unfamiliar conditions the Christian has a particular responsibility to interpret the mind of Christ. If the whole material universe is a product of the hands of God, then every part of it may be used for holy ends, and the study and control of it may be true vocations. The Christian cannot deny the new knowledge or seek to evade the decisions that it brings, but must soberly welcome both as a gift of God. Further, he must insist that all the applications of this knowledge must be considered only in the light of that understanding which we have in our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus the gist of Professor COULSON's message finds expression in the following illustration. Last Christmas he received a card from an artist friend. On it was depicted a symbolic representation of the multiplying chain reaction whereby each uranium nucleus as it splits gives birth to three neutrons, each of which in its turn may trigger off the splitting of another uranium atom and so lead to a continuous and self-sustaining reaction. In the centre, however, in a brick red colour reminiscent of blood and fire, there was the figure of the Christ Child. To Professor COULSON this was not a sentimental fancy, for, as he says, ' The nucleus of the atom, with its strength and fiery power has got something to say about Him who formed the swarming heavens : and if we would understand and use this strange new power creatively, we have got to see the Christ Child, and all that this figure stands for, linked with it. If we fail to see it like this, then the fiery power will consume us.'

The Interpretation of the Parables

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IT is almost incredible yet true that from the Apostolic Age to the end of the nineteenth century the parables of Jesus were regularly misinterpreted. This misinterpretation stemmed from one erroneous assumption, that the parables were allegories.

Now the basic difference between an allegory (like Paul's picture of the Christian Warrior in Eph 6 or *The Pilgrim's Progress*) and a parable is this : whereas in the allegory each detail is a separate metaphor with a significance of its own which has to be discovered, the parable exists to enforce one point. Thus the parable of The Prodigal Son, which we ought to call the parable of The Gracious Father (since he is the central figure in it), proclaims one truth—the free forgiveness of God to penitent sinners—but watch what happened when so eminent an Early Church Father as Tertullian expounded it. The Elder Son is the Jew, the Younger the Christian. The patrimony, of which the Younger Son claimed his share, is that knowledge of God a man has by his birthright. The citizen in the far country to whom he hired his services is the Devil. The robe bestowed on the penitent Prodigal is that sonship from which Adam fell, as the ensuing feast is the

Lord's Supper. We may at least be grateful that he made no attempt to identify the fatted calf!

But even Tertullian's ingenuity pales before that of the great Augustine when he got busy on the Good Samaritan. You remember his equations? The 'certain man' who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho is Adam, Jerusalem representing the heavenly city of peace from which he fell, and Jericho our human mortality to which he went. The robbers are the Devil and his angels, who stripped Adam of his immortality. The priest and the Levite who passed by on the other side are the priesthood and ministry of the Old Testament who could not save. Who is the Good Samaritan but Christ Himself? The binding up of the traveller's wounds is the restraint of sin, while the oil poured in is the comfort of hope. The beast is the flesh in which Christ came to earth; the inn is the Church; the innkeeper the Apostle Paul; and the two pence, the commandments of love. *C'est pittoresque—mais ce n'est pas histoire!*

Yes, we smile at it, but the book many of our grandfathers used, Trench on the *Parables* [1864], does the same thing (if not quite so badly) and I have no doubt that the method still has its practitioners.

The great protest against all this misguided subtlety was made in 1899 by Adolf Jülicher in his *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*, a book which deserved but never found an English translator. The parables, Jülicher insisted, are not allegorical cryptograms to be spelled out, point after point, by an ingenious exegesis. They have one point, and one point only. On that point the whole comparison focuses, and the various details in the story, which give it an air of verisimilitude, are but feathers to wing the arrow to its mark.

That Jülicher was fundamentally right, nobody nowadays doubts. The only question to be asked is, Has he not, like most pioneers, overplayed his hand a little? Do the parables of Jesus *never* contain allegory? Is there not a veiled reference to Jesus as the 'bridegroom' in the little parable of The Sons of the Bridechamber? And, clearer still, in the tale of The Wicked Vinedressers is not the Owner of the Vineyard God, His servants, the prophets, and the Beloved Son, Christ Himself? In short, we must not let the shade of Jülicher affright us from admitting some allegorical elements in the parables, more especially when we know that allegory formed part of the cultural heritage of Jesus? (The Old Testament contains a number of allegories, and we know that the rabbis used them.)

But if the parable exists to make one point, what kind of point is it? It was in this part of the enquiry that Jülicher, having insisted on the one point, went on to miss it completely. His capital error was to make the parables teach *moral commonplaces*. If you turn to him asking what is the point of the parable of The Talents, the answer you get is: 'A reward is only earned by performance.' Similarly the story of The Unjust Steward teaches: 'Wise use of the present is the condition of future happiness.' The point of the Rich Fool is that 'even the wealthiest of men depend wholly on the power and mercy of God.' And so on.

You can guess what his final picture was like. The Jesus who emerges from Jülicher's researches is a typically Liberal Jesus who goes about indoctrinating men in moral truth by the deft use of picturesque parables. But is this the real Jesus? And would men have ever bothered to crucify a Galilean Tusitala who told pleasant stories to enforce prudential platitudes? Of course they wouldn't.

But if Jülicher had left the task of interpretation half done, he had cleared the way for the next and revolutionary advance which came thirty-six years later. Need I say that I am referring to C. H. Dodd's *Parables of the Kingdom* [1935]? I can still remember the thrill with which I read that book. Dodd, if I may adapt Lowell's words, cut the cables and gave me a glimpse of blue waters. And I should agree with Joachim Jeremias, who, a dozen years later [1947], was to dot the i's and stroke the t's of Dodd's exposition, that it is unthinkable there should ever be any retreat from Dodd's essential insights. What then did Dodd and Jeremias do which Jülicher had not done? *They put the parables back into their true setting, which is the ministry of Jesus seen as the great eschatological act of God in which He visited and redeemed His people.* But are not the parables already in their true setting? Some are, but by no means all of them. We must remember that in the period of the oral tradition—roughly, the generation A.D. 30–60—many of the parables circulated as separate units, and inevitably their original settings were often forgotten and lost,[1] so that the Church was forced to give them new settings and applications. I will take three examples. Beyond any doubt on Jesus' lips the parable of The Lost Sheep was aimed at Pharisees and others who complained that Jesus welcomed sinners. This is its setting in Luke, and its true one; but turn the parable up in Matthew and you will find that it is there addressed to the *disciples* and has become a call to faithful pastorship. Or consider the parable of The Defendant which occurs in both Matthew and Luke. When Jesus told this parable, it was a summons to

[1] Mt 13, where seven parables have been collected together, their original settings having been lost.

Israel to repent before it was too late in face of the great crisis which was the coming of God's reign. 'Come to terms with God before His judgment falls on you!' But in Matthew's Sermon on the Mount it has become a *moral* rule on the importance of reconciliation. Now it says: 'Don't let your quarrel with your brother take you the length of the law-court.' Or consider the parable of The Talents found in Matthew, with its variant version of The Pounds in Luke, so that we might call it the parable of Money in Trust. As it stands now in the Gospels, it reads like a summons to be faithful in view of the imminence of our Lord's Second Coming. But when Jesus spoke the parable, He was addressing the religious leaders of Jewry, to whom so much had been entrusted, and warning them that the Day of God's reckoning with them was at hand. And it was, as history shows.

Once you recognize these things, it becomes possible to restore the parables to their original settings and see them against their proper historical background. What is it? It is what we have learned to call 'realized eschatology.' Now don't let us quarrel over the word 'realized'—subsitute if you like, the word 'inaugurated'; but this is undoubtedly the true backcloth against which the parables of Jesus become pregnant with point and meaning, weapons of war, if you like, in the campaign of the Kingdom of God against the Kingdom of the Devil. You can then arrange them in groups, so that the Kingdom themes which Jesus meant them to illustrate stand out, and the essential notes of the Galilean gospel ring out vividly and memorably.

Jeremias proposes eight such groupings, but I think we can get along pretty well with *four*.

First, *How the Kingdom Comes and Grows*. Here the twin parables of The New Patch on the Old Garment and The New Wine in the Old Wineskins proclaim the utter newness of the Kingdom and the folly of all attempts to accommodate it to the old order. (This is the point Paul was later to develop in his contrast between the Law and the gospel.) Four parables tell us how the Kingdom comes and grows: with certainty and to great endings, say the two parables of The Mustard Seed and The Leaven; quietly but irresistibly says the parable of The Seed Growing Secretly; and in spite of all failures, yielding an abundant harvest, says that story of a farmer's fortunes which we call The Sower. But Jesus does not confine Himself to images from agriculture. He sees the Kingdom as God's Great Feast, to which the invitation goes out, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' Or as a great warfare against the Kingdom of the Devil in which He, the Messiah, spearheads the attack. (The Divided Kingdom and the Strong Man Despoiled.) He compares it to a Seine net which catches all kinds of fish. So the gospel of the Kingdom makes its appeal to all and sundry but in the process sifts worthy and unworthy by their response to its claims and challenges.

2. The second group of parables may be entitled: *The Blessings of the Kingdom: God's Mercy for Sinners*.

None of the groups takes us so near to the heart of the Good News as this one,[1] in which the grace of God is the dominant note. We hear it in the parable of The Labourers in the Vineyard which says: 'The rewards of the Kingdom are not measured by man's desert but by God's grace.' This in answer to the criticism that Jesus opened the Kingdom to publicans and harlots. For the strange thing is that this group of parables were all spoken to His *critics* in defence of the gospel. I have mentioned The Lost Sheep. Its companion parable, The Lost Coin, spoken to Pharisees who complained that Jesus 'received sinners,' proclaims the same truth: 'If a man will be at such pains to recover his lost property, how much more will God to save His wandering children? This is what I, as God's Representative, am doing.' The same is true of the greatest parable of all, The Prodigal Son. The simplest explanation is that the Father represents God, the Elder Brother the complaining Pharisees, and the Younger Brother the publicans and sinners. It puts in terms of moving human relations the supreme truth which Paul borrowed law-court language to express; 'the God who justifies the ungodly.' Finally, to this same gospel of God's mercy to sinners belongs The Pharisee and the Publican. Speaking to all friends of the Elder Brother (and they still exist!) Jesus says in it: 'God rejects the self-righteous and welcomes the despairing sinner. This is what the Almighty is like, and how He is acting through Me.'

3. The third group of parables describes: *Discipleship in the Kingdom*.

To be a disciple of Jesus is to be in the Kingdom, since Jesus Himself embodies, and is, the Kingdom. Such parables suggest the meaning of true discipleship. His call for disciples we hear in the parable of The Harvest and the Labourers. Before men decide, they must count well the cost, say the twin parables of The Tower Builder and The Warring King. But to win its riches is something worth any sacrifice, say the parables of The Hid Treasure and The Precious Pearl. In the companion parables of The Importunate Widow and The Friend at Midnight, Jesus calls for men with a faith which refuses to take 'No' for an answer and ever expects great things from God. True

[1] Jeremias calls it 'the gospel within the Gospels.'

disciples, as men in whom God has kindled His light, are, like Isaiah's Servant, to be 'a light to lighten the Gentiles' (Lamp and Bushel, and cf. Mt 5^{14}); but they must beware: as old Israel lost its savour, so too may God's new Israel (Savourless Salt). Let them be men known for their abounding forgiveness (The Unmerciful Servant) and for their deeds rather than their fine professions (The Two Builders and The Tree and the Fruit).

4. Finally, we come to a very important group of parables all dealing with *The Crisis of the Kingdom.*

Here we need to remember that Jesus saw His ministry, which was the inauguration of the Reign of God, moving on to a supreme crisis in God's dealings with His people, a crisis which would involve not only the Messiah's death and victory and the rise of a New Israel but also the destruction of the Jewish nation and Temple. Against such a background all the parables which deal in Zero Hour and General Emergency become luminous. In some He warns the Jewish people against the time of God's visitation (The Playing Children, Weather Signs, The Talents) and calls Israel to repent before it is too late (The Defendant, The Barren Fig Tree, The Closed Door); in others He seeks to 'alert' them to the Great Emergency (The Porter, The Burglar, The Ten Virgins).[1]

But, alas, Israel did not know the time of her visitation or the things that belonged unto her peace, and the great drama moved to its climax.

So the Son of man, the Speaker of the parables and the central Figure in the drama, marched on Jerusalem where, on an April morning in the year A.D. 30, the crisis culminated in a Crucifixion outside the city wall, and, three days later, in an Empty Tomb. One great parable, which is half allegory, preserves for us His final warning to the Jewish leaders—the parable of The Wicked Vine-dressers. It is 'Love's last appeal' to a rebellious people. No full-length parable survives to tell us how the Messiah conceived of the purpose of His dying; but the gospel tradition preserves three parables in miniature which take us some way into the secret: the sayings about The Cup, The Baptism, and The Ransom. The Messiah was drinking the Cup of the Lord's wrath; He was undergoing a Baptism of blood whereby others might be cleansed; as the Servant Messiah, He was giving His life to ransom 'the many.'

By His death and resurrection, the Kingdom of God, which had been the theme of all His parables, 'came with power': the Holy Spirit descended on the waiting disciples, and the new People of God, which is the Christian Church, was born.

[1] Possibly The Unjust Steward should be included in this group. 'This knave knew how to act in an emergency So must you in a much greater one!'

And now, by way of epilogue, let me raise the question: How does all this affect us who have to preach from the Bible and would fain make effective use of the parables?

One thing is clear. Much of what the scholars are telling us runs counter to interpretations of the parables long current in the Church. Must all our sermons embodying such interpretations be forthwith consigned to the waste-paper basket? My answer would be 'No'—*if* the sermons have authentic spiritual value of their own. For a true Word of the Lord may be drawn from a parable of Jesus, even though it depends on a turn of meaning not in our Lord's mind when He told it. But if we mean to claim His authority for such utterances of ours, let us be sure that they really represent His teaching. 'Here,' as Dr. G. H. Boobyer has said, 'Biblical scholarship rightly exercises an important function, for the spirits of the prophets should be subject not only to the prophets but also, to some extent, to the professors!'

This said, let me suggest that the scholars' findings on the parables mean two things:

(1) No more capricious allegorizing of the parables; and (2) No more employment of them simply as pegs for moralizing sermons.

Positively, the new approach to the parables means that, when we decide to preach from one, our first task should be to discover what our Lord meant when He first uttered it. There we must begin, though we must not stop there. But someone may say: 'If the true setting-in-life of the parables is the historic crisis of A.D. 28–30, when God came in Christ's ministry and mission, have they any relevance for A.D. 1957?'

Most certainly they have. For if the parables let us into the secret of what the coming of Christ and the Kingdom meant to His contemporaries, by the same token do they interpret for us our own experience, to whom God still comes in the crises of the twentieth century. Says C. H. Dodd: 'The historical crisis of the Gospels is re-enacted in the crises that come upon men and nations. God in His Kingdom, power and glory, confronts us too with blessing and judgment, with challenge and opportunity. In such situations the parables leap out of their historical settings and speak to our condition.'

Lest this sound too vague and general to be helpful, let me remind you that the greatest of Christ's parables have about them a timeless quality. The parable of The Good Samaritan never ceases to pose its question: 'Who is my neighbour?' and its true answer is given in lives like those of Grenfell of Labrador, Kagawa of Japan and Schweitzer of Lambarene. So, too, with such parables as The Prodigal Son, The Sower,

The Rich Man and Lazarus, The Pharisee and the Publican. If a man cannot preach the Word of God to this generation from such parables he ought not to be in the Christian ministry.

Other parables, like those in group 4, which are more specifically related to the crisis of A.D. 28–30, may seem to pose a harder problem. But consider their main themes. Do they not call on us, as they did on Jesus' own generation, to 'discern the signs of the times,' to realize that God still visits men in judgment and blessing, and to know that the constant duty of Christians is to repent and hear what God the Lord is saying to them amid all the chaos of this twentieth century?

Yes, the parables still speak, if we will but hear our Lord with understanding and translate His words into modern terms. Read Henry Scott Holland on The Sower, J. S. Whale on The Friend at Midnight, or J. S. Stewart on 'Love's Last Appeal,' and you will be in no doubt about it. By prayerful study and with the guidance of the Spirit, we too may hear what God in Christ has to say to us in these old, old stories and find in them light to lead us through these dark and dangerous days:

Bewildered, dejected and prone to despair,
To Him as at first do we turn and beseech.
Our ears are all open! Give heed to our prayer.
O Son of man, teach.

Literature

THE COMING OF CHRIST

THE Second Coming of Christ has been claiming attention for some time. In 1945 we had Dr. T. F. Glasson's 'Second Advent' and in 1954 Dr. Beasley-Murray's 'Jesus and the Future' followed in 1957 by his 'Commentary on Mark Thirteen.' Now Dr. J. A. T. Robinson, Fellow and Dean of Clare College, Cambridge, has treated the same theme in *Jesus and His Coming* (S.C.M.; 15s. net) in a detailed, scholarly, and well-documented work.

Dr. Robinson's views are similar to those of Dr. Glasson, although he does not agree with the latter in denying the expectation of a final judgment. He rejects the idea of a Second Coming of Christ as an event in history parallel to the first, and prefers to find the reality behind the words of the Creed, 'Whence he shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead,' in the coming of Christ in the Holy Spirit and in the life and worship of the Church. This view, of course, is not new, but it has rarely, if ever, been maintained so effectively as in this painstaking and critical study of the evidence in the Gospels and the Epistles. In a sense the investigation amounts to a demythologizing of the doctrine. Dr. Robinson speaks more than once of 'the myth of the Parousia' and he is manifestly concerned to find a more spiritual presentation of its abiding values. 'There is but one coming,' he writes, 'begun at Christmas, perfected on the Cross, and continuing till all are included in it.'

Dr. Robinson examines the Church's expectation of Christ and comes to the conclusion that 'no evidence is to be found that the *Parousia* expectation formed part of the earliest strata of Apostolic Christianity.' He makes a critical study of Jesus' own expectation, giving particular attention to Mk 14^{62}, and concludes that He was speaking of 'an immediate vindication of himself and his cause, out of the very jaws of humiliation and defeat.' A real 'coming of the Son of Man' is implied in His sayings, but not a spectacular return. Special attention is given to the eschatological parables, and here, in agreement with what perhaps may be called 'the neo-Cambridge school,' supported by Dr. Joachim Jeremias, the view is accepted that originally they referred to a crisis, religious and political, precipitated by the rejection of Jesus and His message. The expectation of the Church is to be found in these parables and in the eschatological discourses in Mk 13, Lk 17 and 21, which originally spoke of the fate of Jerusalem and have been given an apocalyptic explanation. Dr. Robinson also faces the challenge of Thessalonians and traces the emergence of the Parousia doctrine. He concludes that 'with the exception perhaps of the "Q" material, one could say that, within the Gospels, the application of the teaching of Jesus to a *Parousia* after an interval is a purely editorial feature.'

It is to be expected that Dr. Robinson's submissions will meet with reserve and opposition in many quarters. In particular, his explanation of why Christ was expected twice is vulnerable. He writes: 'The explanation, I believe, is to be sought in an unresolved crisis in the Christology of the primitive Church, centring in the problem whether or not the Messianic event had taken place, whether *the Christ* had come or not.' He admits that this cannot be more than a hypothesis but finds evidence in its favour, less the Lukan phrase 'that his Christ should suffer,' in Ac 3 as compared with Ac 2. His estimate of the Fourth Gospel, as perhaps composed relatively early and as representing a tradition of the teaching of Jesus

which had never seriously undergone the tendency towards apocalyptic, is a suggestion which it is not easy to accept. Further, many will feel that a forecast of Jesus Himself of His return to His own, although doubtless overlaid in the Gospels by apocalyptic colouring, is the simplest explanation of a hope so widely based in the New Testament. One thing, however, is certain: those who accept Dr. Robinson's case and no less those who reject it will agree that he has written a book, provocative, suggestive, and full of religious value, which needs to be read and pondered long by students and thoughtful laymen alike.

VINCENT TAYLOR

THE APOCRYPHA

In recent years increasing attention has been paid to the intertestamental literature, and especially since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls brought new intertestamental writings to light, and directed fresh attention to some of the works already known. Professor B. M. Metzger, one of the translators of the American Revised Standard Version of the Apocrypha, has issued an excellent *Introduction to the Apocrypha* (Oxford University Press; 28s. net) simultaneously with the appearance of that new translation. While its limitation to the Apocrypha is to be understood, it might with profit have dealt also with the other intertestamental books, from which their study cannot to-day be divorced.

We are here given not merely an account of the contents of the books of the Apocrypha, and a survey of what may with probability be concluded about their date and origin, but much that is not found in similar books of introduction. There is an excellent chapter on the significance of the Apocrypha for the student of the New Testament, and another very valuable chapter on the influence of these books on literature, music and art. The place of the Apocrypha in the Canon is well treated, and many readers will particularly value the information here given on the attitude to these books in the Protestant churches, where fuller evidence is collected than is easily to be found elsewhere. There is an Appendix on English translations of the Apocrypha, where the story of the successive Authorized, Revised, and Revised Standard Versions is told. A second Appendix deals with the New Testament Apocrypha, but, as above indicated, the reviewer would have preferred something about the other intertestamental literature, which is more closely related to the Apocrypha than are the New Testament Apocrypha.

Throughout the book citations are in the new Revised Standard Version, and Professor Metzger has a clear and interesting style, which makes his book easy to read. It is deserving of a wide circulation, and there will be few readers, from the simplest to the most erudite, who will not learn much from it.

H. H. ROWLEY

THE FIELD IS THE WORLD

The Unfinished Task, by Stephen Neill (Lutterworth Press; 12s. 6d. net), is the most important book I have read in 1957. It is to be hoped that Departments of Practical Training will make it compulsory reading for Divinity students, and that ministers will find sermons here—some to preach to their people and some to search their own hearts.

'The field is the world.' And who in the world is capable of surveying it, with knowledge alike of homeside parishes, the European situation, the North American continent (likely to be dominant, whether we like it or not, in religious as in other world affairs), the sensitive nationalisms of Asia, and all the clashes of colour and of culture in once dark Africa? The answer is, Stephen Neill. Who else could write from distinguished personal service upon so many fronts? He has been missionary Bishop in the villages of South India, long resident in Geneva and associated with ecumenical affairs, missioner ten years ago to Oxford University and since to several American colleges, recently visiting Professor to a German university, and now (a work too little noticed in this country, but one which will ring round the world) editor of World Christian Books.

Each section bristles with memorable words, beginning with these about the Church: 'It is no wiser and no more perfect than were the Apostles, and yet equally with them the accredited witness to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ' (p. 13). 'It is an organism, growing into an unknown future, and developing towards an as yet undefined perfection. Within it the individual also is called to the adventure of growing. . . . This is the only real answer to the loud question of the young, Why should I go to church? Cf. Colossians 2^{19}' (p. 18).

He marks youth as 'the first frontier' and here quotes William Temple: 'A man's business is to surrender as much of himself as he knows to as much of God as he knows,' adding, 'and obviously this must be a lifelong business' (p. 45). He goes on to more 'flexible ministries' if we are to meet the needs of industrial populations, emigrants, and widely scattered Christian minorities. 'In the Early Church the essential thing was the Eucharist every Lord's Day. . . . Now almost anybody is allowed to preach and hardly any one can celebrate Holy Communion. . . . [What about]

the possible ordination of the ordinary farmer or merchant or lawyer, who is prepared to give spare time to the Church ? ' (p. 65). He treats of the Church under totalitarian rule, in the Welfare State, in the newly self-governing countries of Asia and Africa : ' Culture without religion is an unanimated body. Religion unincorporated in life and culture resembles a disembodied spirit ' (p. 110). He judges the weakness of Younger Churches to be due to too easy baptism, lack of instruction, of pastoral care, of active contribution, of witness in family and clan and tribe, and of sense of the Universal Church. ' Competent knowledge of the Bible is the only basis for effective Christian witness ' (p. 130). Instead of linking the old S.C.M. slogan ' The evangelisation of the world in this generation ' with a now discredited liberal optimism, he is bold to criticize ' refusal in our day to face the challenge ' of this watchword rightly understood (p. 162).

The book is free from misprints and faultlessly produced. The only breath of criticism from this reviewer is that a master of simple style should have caused him twice to reach for a dictionary—to look up ' indefectible ' and ' etiolated.'

JOHN FOSTER

DAMASCUS

Israel and the Aramaeans of Damascus, by Professor M. F. Unger, Th.D., Ph.D. (James Clarke ; 21s. net), is a thesis submitted for a doctorate at Johns Hopkins University, and is an Evangelical Theological Society publication. There are a hundred and eight pages of text and seventy pages of notes. The first three chapters, dealing with the history of Damascus from the earliest times to the reign of David, when Damascus became part of the Hebrew kingdom, are so packed with information that, for readers who are not familiar with the history of the Near East during this period, they are not easy to follow ; but they contain a valuable attempt to use the latest archaeological evidence in reconstructing the chronology, the sequence of the movements of peoples in the second and third millennia B.C., and the place of the Hebrews as well as the Aramaeans in the world of that time. The remaining seven chapters trace the history of the Aramaean kingdom round Damascus, with special reference to its contacts with Israel, until the fall of the Israelite northern kingdom in 721 B.C., or, as Olmstead contends, in 723 B.C. It is this latter part of the book which will be of most interest and use to ministers and Old Testament students. By taking the unusual attitude of looking at Israelite history from the angle of an Aramaean in the Syrian kingdom in the north, the author sheds much new light on the Old Testament story. Particularly in reference to David's Syrian wars there is a completely new and vivid picture of the greatness of the kingdom that was built around Palestine as centre ; and there is a good reconstruction of the relationship between Ahab and Syria. The notes reveal the extent to which the author is indebted to W. F. Albright, with whom he seldom disagrees. There is a misprint of ' eastward ' for ' westward ' on p. 77, but the book is an extremely valuable study, and an excellent attempt both to fit what is known of the early history of this area into the shorter period caused by the acceptance of a much later date for Hammurabi ; and also to collate the Biblical evidence from Kings and Chronicles and relate it to archaeological discoveries.

J. N. SCHOFIELD

How was the Puritan Movement, which fell into the doldrums after the Hampton Court Conference, brought back for a brief period into the light of Court favour and for a long period into Parliamentary importance ? Irvonwy Morgan's researches, published under the title *Prince Charles's Puritan Chaplain* (Allen and Unwin ; 21s. net), point to the central significance for the answer to that question of Dr. John Preston, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, Preacher to the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn and Chaplain to the Prince who became Charles I. Preston's policy of associating the Puritans with Buckingham and the Prince failed, but out of it came that Parliamentary Puritanism which formed the spearhead of the attack on Laud, Strafford and King Charles. This is a real contribution to knowledge of an important period when politics and religion were inseparable. We note misprints on pp. 45 and 47.

The Evidence of Tradition, by Dr. Daniel J. Theron, M.A. (Bowes and Bowes ; 25s. net), is precisely the book for which teachers and students of the New Testament long have waited. Its sub-title is ' Selected Source Material for the Study of the History of the Early Church, Introduction, and Canon of the New Testament.'

It is divided into three sections. The first section deals with History, illustrated from Jewish, Gentile and Christian sources. In the section on Gentile Sources we have Tacitus and Suetonius material, the Pliny-Trajan correspondence, the Hadrian rescript, the Epictetus reference, the Letter of Mara, and the Tibur and Gallio Inscriptions. The second section deals with the History of the New Testament books. Here we have the notices of the Greek and Latin

Fathers, a fragment of the Tatian Diatessaron, the Monarchian Prologues to the Gospels; the Marcionite Prologues to the Pauline Epistles and other material. The third section deals with the Canon. Here we have useful material on The Ending of Mark, a very full selection of Canonical Lists beginning with the Muratorian Canon and ending with the Canon of the Synod of Carthage, and further material. There are very useful appendices with lists of the Roman Emperors, the Legates of Syria, the Procurators of Palestine, etc. Each section is prefaced with a judiciously chosen bibliography.

All the material is given in Greek or Latin, as the case may be, with the English translation on the opposite page. It is of the greatest value to have all this material between two covers. There is now no longer any excuse for quoting the basic traditional documents at second-hand. To have this book beside one is as good as to have a library on one's desk. The book is excellently printed and adequately documented.

In the Spring of 1955 *The Early Church and the Coming Great Church*, by Professor John Knox, was published in America and we made it the subject of our first 'Note' in June, 1955. Now we welcome the British edition. The publishers are the Epworth Press and the price 12s. 6d. net—this is considerably less than the American price—and we hope that the British edition will have a wide circulation here.

In Debt to Christ (Highway Press; 4s. 6d.) concentrates on the Cross—the centre of the Christian message. The book is a persuasive exposition of the Cross 'for ordinary Christians'—the author, the Home Education Secretary of the C.M.S., the Rev. Douglas Webster. Mr. Webster quotes freely from P. T. Forsyth and in the dedication expresses an Anglican's gratitude to a 'prophet of the Cross.'

Are we forgetting the writings of Amy Wilson Carmichael? Mr. Webster ends his book with Gal 6^{17} and her poem 'No Scar?'

Hast thou no scar?
No hidden scar on foot, or side, or hand?
I hear thee sung as mighty in the land,
I hear them hail thy bright ascendant star,
Hast thou no scar?

Hast thou no wound?
Yet I was wounded by the archers, spent,
Leaned Me against a tree to die; and rent
By ravening beasts that compassed Me, I swooned:
Hast *thou* no wound?

No wound? no scar?
Yet, as the Master shall the servant be,
And pierced are the feet that follow Me;
But thine are whole: can he have followed far
Who has not wound nor scar?

The Rt. Rev. Gerald Ellison, Bishop of Chester, has issued under the title *The Churchman's Duty* (Hodder and Stoughton; 7s. 6d. net) seven charges delivered during his primary visitation of the diocese. The first three, which deal respectively with the Character, the Law, and the Authority and Discipline of the Church of England, contain much that non-Anglicans as well as Anglicans should know. The fourth on the Christian in his personal relationships and the fifth on the Christian and his use of time have something for all Christians, while the sixth and seventh, dealing largely with domestic problems, are particularly for Anglicans. The Bishop is to be congratulated on his efforts to make his visitation a useful and stimulating occasion, and this record of it deserves the wider publicity now made possible.

It takes a real master of a subject to write a good popular introduction to it. Once again that truth is demonstrated in what may be termed an introduction to the faith and piety of the English Protestant tradition—*Six Makers of English Religion*, by Dr. Gordon Rupp (Hodder and Stoughton; 8s. 6d. net).

The six are William Tyndale and the English Bible, Thomas Cranmer and the Book of Common Prayer, John Foxe and his 'Book of Martyrs,' John Milton and 'Paradise Lost,' John Bunyan and 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' and Isaac Watts and his hymns. These books were widely influential and had behind them the creative energy of genius. Three of them belong rather to Nonconformity and three to the Established Church, but without some knowledge of them all English religion cannot be appreciated. The men themselves and their diverse careers help to interpret their works and to exemplify the tradition. Dr. Rupp writes out of an abundance of detailed knowledge, but that knowledge is never obtruded. The charm of the writing and the interest of the portraiture carry the reader forward instructed and enthralled.

Mr. Denis Baly has produced an excellent survey of the geography of Palestine—using the term in its widest meaning—in an easily readable form, adapted especially for the use of ministers and those who teach Bible knowledge in *The Geography of the Bible* (Lutterworth Press; 25s. net). There is a general section of nine chapters dealing with geology, climate, flora and fauna, but under much more intriguing titles; a regional

section of eleven chapters, describing the various districts of Palestine, Syria, and Transjordan; a glossary of geological terms; three pages of notes; an extensive bibliography; and two indices, which make reference to Biblical texts, names, and subjects easy. There are ninety-seven of the author's own photographs and forty-seven maps and diagrams, all of them—like the book itself—providing excellent illustrative material for building up Bible background. The author avoids reference to the present unhappy situation in the country, although he permits himself the prophecy that, 'if history is anything to go by, the present situation in which most of the Judaean and Samarian hills are governed from Amman is highly insecure and destined to be purely temporary' (p. 13). Isaiah $7^{21f.}$ is regarded as a prophecy of famine and want rather than of plenty (p. 98). The sub-title of the book is 'A Study in Historical Geography' and the wrapper compares it with George Adam Smith's 'Historical Geography of the Holy Land'; it will not supersede that great classic: its emphasis is rather on religious geography, and our study shelves will have to find room for both books.

The Papacy and Anglican Orders, by Mr. George F. Lewis (Mowbray; 2s. net), is a discussion of a vexed question by a writer who was disturbed by the claim of Rome that Anglican orders are invalid, and who, having satisfied himself by a careful examination, now shares his results with any who seek reassurance on the point. He finds the essential point of the whole matter in the actual character of the Anglican Ordinal, and concludes on that basis that the Papal Bull of 1896 condemning Anglican orders is an untrustworthy document in which the Pope has erred.

A *Flannelgraph in Full Colour* has been prepared by Mr. Maurice F. D. Pavey illustrating the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. The book gives instructions on how to use the Flannelgraph in teaching and includes lessons from the Tabernacle in the form of a conducted tour. The price is 8s. 6d. net. This *Flannelgraph* is No. 11 in a series which may be procured from Messrs. Oliphants, 33 Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.

The Four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, by Mr. Robert J. Denholm (Pilgrim Press; 2s. 6d. net), has as its sub-title 'Notes on their Structure and Characteristics.' This little book gives in lucid and handy form a thoroughly up-to-date account of the structure of the Gospels and of the Synoptic problem, and of Acts. Here are the condensed results of modern scholarship most aptly and attractively set out. Not the least useful section of the book is the chapter in which the events of Passion Week are set out day by day in chronological detail. This book is designed to help teachers of Religious Instruction in day schools, and pupils in the senior classes, but students of the New Testament at all levels will find it a most useful book to keep beside them. This is the kind of book which mediates the assured results of scholarship in the best possible way.

'We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be "wholly sanctified" and that their "whole spirit and soul and body" may "be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."' These Words—article ten of the doctrines of the Salvation Army—form the subject of *The Call to Holiness*, by Mr. Frederick L. Coutts (Salvationist Publishing and Supplies; cloth 6s., paper 3s. 6d. net), which contains seventeen addresses—simple, direct and persuasive.

From the same Press comes an Anthology—*With Colours Waving* (8s. 6d. net)—which is more than a collection of the sayings or writings of Salvationists. It presents the 'voice of The Salvation Army.' The Anthology has been prepared by Major William Burrows under five headings—To God be the Glory, With Him Communing, Saved by Grace, A Band that shall Conquer the Foe, Crowning Day. Very pertinent to the Anthology is the saying of the founder of the Army, 'I want you always to bear in mind that it is in the nature of a fire to go out; you must keep it stirred and fed, and the ashes removed.'

We have received from the Science of Society Foundation, Elkridge, Maryland, a large volume, priced at $6.00, entitled *Citadel, Market and Altar*, by Mr. Spencer Heath. It is intended to provide an outline of Socionomy, a new Natural Science of Society. The author, who has come to his task after a varied career as lawyer, engineer and inventor, holds that property and ownership are essential to all contractual as opposed to coercive relationships, and that, while the socialistic ideal is sound, the methods proposed have been futile and false. He appears to believe that it is possible to have large production organizations serving a property-owning democracy and without arbitrary bureacratic rule, and that this free society is likely to come to pass without drastic political action. Has he taken sufficient account of fallen human nature?

In an account of a number of publications dealing with the Dead Sea Scrolls which we gave in the May, 1957 issue (p. 237) there was included Professor Theodor H. Gaster's *The Scriptures of the Dead Sea Sect in English Translation*. It should be noted that this book may be obtained from Messrs. Secker and Warburg, Ltd. They have a cloth-bound edition at 30s. and a paper-bound edition at 10s. 6d. net.

A second edition of *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church*, by Professor S. G. F. Brandon, D.D., has just been issued by the S.P.C.K. (30s. net). Three useful Notes, additional to the first edition, are now included. They are on 'The Significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls'; 'Dr. Zuntz on the Formation of the Corpus Paulinum'; and 'The Date of the Markan Apocalypse.' In our review of the first edition (November, 1951) we explained that the thesis of the book was that 'after the Resurrection experiences, the next most crucial event in the life of the Christian Church was the overthrow of the Jewish nation, which was dramatically epitomized in the destruction of its holy city of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.'

Professor Brandon held that in its beginning Christianity was essentially a Jewish, and in no small measure a political, faith. When Paul entered the Church something new emerged—a spiritual gospel which had the seeds of a universal gospel in it. When Paul was arrested and taken to Rome there was an eclipse of Paulinism and the triumph of the already strong Jewish Church at Jerusalem. Now this triumph of the Jewish outlook on Christianity would have turned the Church into a Jewish institution but for one thing—the destruction of Jerusalem wiped out the Jerusalem Church.

The S.C.M. Press has begun a series of 'Studies in Ministry and Worship' which is intended to provide an ecumenical forum for the discussion of problems and for the presentation of fresh approaches that have been tested by some practical experience. The General Editor is Professor G. W. H. Lampe.

Two volumes are now before us. The first, *What is Liturgical Preaching?*, by Professor Reginald H. Fuller of Seabury-Western Seminary, U.S.A., published at 6s. net, is in part an Anglican plea for a sermon to be preached at every celebration of the Lord's Supper. But what kind of sermon? The central portion of the book answers that question and deals helpfully and practically from that point of view with different types of Scripture passages. Here the author has much to give even to those of traditions which already accept his initial plea. The title of the second—*The Church's Understanding of Itself*, by Mr. R. H. T. Thompson (8s. 6d. net)—might lead one to expect a technical theological discussion. In fact, the author, who is a Lecturer in Psychology from New Zealand, presents a study of four Birmingham parishes, based upon the method of statistical analysis as applied not to the parish as a whole but to the actual members of the four congregations in question. The interview schedule used is printed as an appendix. Some of the results of the investigation are staggering, all the more so since one fancies that similar results would be found in similar congregations far and wide. Space forbids illustration. Read the book; try the interview schedule on yourself and your friends; estimate how your parish would compare with these four.

We have before us a collection of seven papers by Professor N. B. Stonehouse of Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia—*Paul Before the Areopagus and Other New Testament Studies* (Tyndale Press; 15s. net). The other six are on Who crucified Jesus?; Repentance, Baptism and the Gift of the Holy Spirit; The Elders and the Living-Beings in the Apocalypse; R. Bultmann's Jesus; M. Dibelius and the Relation of History and Faith; and Luther and the New Testament Canon. The last seems to be added just to make up a sizeable book. The others are all very much worth while. The first deals convincingly with the view of Schweitzer and others that the whole reported incident of Paul before the Areopagus is unhistorical, and with the view expressed by W. M. Ramsay and often repeated that Paul's address was a failure, that he realized that and never repeated it.

Who crucified Jesus? refutes Zeitlin's view that the Jews were innocent, that there existed a second Sanhedrin whose Quisling excuse was purely political and that they were responsible. This is a valuable discussion which casts light upon the undoubted difficulty about the condemnation and crucifixion of Jesus—condemned by the Jews for blasphemy, executed on political grounds by Pilate. The strange elders and living-beings, who are they? 'The Church and Creation,' answer many. It is here argued that both are angelic beings of a high order.

The two papers on Bultmann and Dibelius respectively will be found most valuable. No student of the New Testament or Early Church History can afford to be ignorant especially of Bultmann's views. This paper was written in 1938 and Bultmann has produced much since then. Yet his conception of Jesus has not materially altered, and understanding of that is indispensable if his later thought is to be intelligible.

Modern Poetry and the Preacher

By the Reverend W. B. J. Martin, Edinburgh

The preacher who neglects the study of modern poetry because of its alleged 'obscurity,' or worse, because it is not immediately useful to him in the production of sermons, is cutting himself off from one of the richest sources of his understanding of man and of the time in which he lives. As Paul Tillich has said, 'Science is the more important in the rise of a spiritual situation but art is the more important for its apprehension.' It is obvious that in his own profound wrestling with reality Tillich owes a great deal to his awareness of the work of our major poets, novelists, dramatists, and painters. Stanley Romaine Hopper, in a lecture on *Contemporary Spiritual Problems as Reflected in Contemporary Literature*, declares that 'modern poetry—along with depth psychology, existential philosophy, and the newer theology—is one of the most vital and creative expressions of our time,' for they all focus at the same point: the soul's experience of alienation. It is interesting to find that philosophers like Gabriel Marcel and Heidegger, whose existential philosophy consists largely in probing and exploring the human condition, both acknowledge their debt to some modern poet. 'I do not hesitate to affirm,' says Marcel, 'that the work of Rilke, for example, brings me, for my own work, infinitely more than any system expounded by a specialist.' And Heidegger cast much of his philosophical work into the form of 'interpretations' of the German poet Hölderlin.

We in this country are fortunate in that our major poets, whether they call themselves Christian or not, are occupied with great themes. If we accept Paul Tillich's definition of religion as being related, not primarily to orthodoxies of creed or dogma, but to man's ultimate concerns, 'with the meaning of life and with all the forces that threaten or support that meaning' (*The Protestant Era*, 273), then the major poets of our day are the preacher's allies, for their work is undeniably religious in character; it is a profound and wholly engaged wrestling with ultimate issues.

In the Foreword of his last book, *The Character of Man*, Emmanuel Mounier, the French Personalist, declared, 'This book is not solely a study of man: it is a struggle for man.' The work of men like T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden, Edwin Muir, is precisely that—a struggle for man. These and other modern poets of first rank are not indulging in 'self-expression' or merely exploring their own experiences, they are at the same time fighting the forces that degrade and dehumanize man, forces incarnated in his environment and within himself. They are concerned, in Auden's words, 'to affirm personal being and personal becoming,' in a world where it is a temptation to succumb to the mechanical and the impersonal, where the pressures are on us to become creatures of routine, creatures of habit, making stock responses.

> We would rather be ruined than changed,
> We would rather die in our dread
> Than climb the cross of the moment
> And let our illusions die.
>
> (*The Age of Anxiety*, 123)

Compared with Wordsworth, Shelley, Longfellow, Tennyson, or even Browning, the modern poets do not lend themselves to easy use by the preacher for sermon illustration or embellishment; they offer us something better, a profound understanding of the predicament of modern man, gained not through intellectual meditation only, though the poets mentioned are highly intellectual persons, but through their own personal involvement in the modern scene. They have immersed themselves in its strains and tensions. Like Eliot they have journeyed into the Waste Land, like Auden they have a first-hand acquaintance with the Age of Anxiety, like Muir they have awakened to the sterility of the Cold Empire of the Abstract Man. As Amos Wilder has truly said, 'The fateful issues of the Christian Faith are often wrestled with more profoundly outside the Church than within. The crisis of modern culture has in many ways taken the Church by surprise; that is, the deeper movements of the age have outrun the Church and left much of its experience, formulation, apologetic behind for the time being. . . . The message lacks relevance because it has not been shaped in adequate awareness of the modern experience. . . . But the contribution of those outside, of "the outriders of the tradition," is often the more significant just because these witnesses speak out of immediate initiation into the stresses of the age' (*Modern Poetry and the Christian Tradition*).

If the preacher wishes not merely to study man, but, like Mounier, to struggle for man, to fight for man against himself, he will neglect the modern poets at his peril. He may not be able to use them directly in his pulpit work, but they

will give him a deeper awareness of the age in which he lives, of the forces which make it practically impossible for modern man to respond to the gospel, of the real problems which agitate man at the centre of his existence—his alienation, his rootlessness, his fragmentation. It is significant that it is to the poets, not to the ecclesiastics or the preachers, that we owe the words that most adequately describe the situation of man to-day —the Hollow Man in the Waste Land, man tormented in the Age of Anxiety, caught up in the Cold Empire of Abstraction.

Part of the so-called 'obscurity' of the modern poet is due to the fact that he is trying to reach man at a deeper level than his conscious mind. It is this which explains the use which the modern poet is making of myth and symbol. As Edwin Muir says, 'Nothing is wholly real until it finds an image as well as a formula for itself. For the image is a record that the conception has been steeped in the unconscious and there accepted by the deeper potencies of the mind.' The language of scientific analysis and description fails to speak to the whole man, so the poet seeks a way of speaking to the whole personality, to the imagination as well as to the reason, to instinct and will as well as to the logical faculty, to the unconscious as well as to the conscious. It is this which explains the use of classical mythology in Eliot, Muir and many others. These stories are part of what Jung has called the 'Collective Unconscious,' what W. B. Yeats and George W. Russell called 'Spiritus Mundi'; they embody a wisdom that is older than individual man and prior to his fragmented modern experience, and therefore they are capable of speaking to him at a deeper level than that of his lately-acquired, thin rationality. It is this, too, which explains the creation of new myths by so many modern writers. Rainer Maria Rilke, a poet who speaks to many modern men isolated from the Christian tradition, gives us a sequence of myth-making poems in his *Duino Elegies*, rightly regarded as the supreme expression of his genius. T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets* contains an elaborate system of symbols and images taken from many ages and many cultures, woven in and out of the poems in an intricate dance of strangely moving beauty. W. H. Auden has given us in *The Sea and the Mirror* a myth based on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, which brings man face to face with the problem of the relationship of the imagination to the problems of existence. Caliban symbolizes the dark forces in man which, if ignored, break out in terrible forms. It is remarkable that this long work was immediately followed by another, this time based on the Christian myth, *For the Time Being, A Christmas Oratio*, in which Auden carries forward and makes more explicit the themes he had been trying to explore and communicate in *The Sea and the Mirror*. So too, with Edwin Muir; his early poems are largely taken up with classical mythology, but he has turned more and more in later years to the great stories of the Bible, to poetic consideration of such themes as 'The Fall' and such characters as Abraham, Moses, and the Christ.

Very moving is Muir's handling of the Second Coming—

> . . . But he will come again, it's said, though not
> Unwanted and unsummoned; for all things,
> Beasts of the field, and woods, and rocks, and seas,
> And all mankind from end to end of the earth
> Will call him with one voice. In our own time,
> Some say, or at a time when time is ripe.
> Then he will come, Christ the uncrucified,
> Christ the discrucified, his death undone,
> His agony unmade, his cross dismantled—
> Glad to be so—and the tormented wood
> Will cure its hurt and grow into a tree
> In a green springing corner of young Eden.

One thing the modern poet is teaching us above everything else—that we must return to the Biblical categories if we are to speak to man in his wholeness. Modern preaching has tended to become too 'scientific' in its approach. Or, as Muir has put it, 'The Word made flesh is here made word again,' translated into conceptual statements and ideology. Discussing Rilke, Stanley Hopper wonders why his non-Christian meditations have taken hold of the inner life of many men more than Christianity has done. He says, 'one does not have to look far for the answer, but he must look in a way in which he has not been accustomed to looking. He must look into himself. Neither scholastic philosophy nor Reformation dogmatics fosters this. The philosophical system, or the system of dogmatics, externalizes the problem and formalizes it, objectivizes it, and thus runs the risk of legalizing it. Thus, in these historical forms of Christian teaching, we are actually insulated from the Divine-human encounter and protected against the dynamics of the Gospel. This is in the nature of the case, since neither Catholic nor Protestant scholasticism contains notions which will receive either the dynamics of the self or the inner dynamics of the human situation. *One must return to the biblical categories to find these, or to give to one's interpretations a fully personalist or existentialist turn*' [my italics].

Nothing is more striking in the poetry of Edwin Muir than his regrasp of the Biblical categories and the personalist and existentialist turn which

he gives to Christian doctrine. He refuses to subscribe to any theology in which

> the Mystery is impaled and bent
> Into an ideological instrument.

He asks,

> How could our race betray
> The image and the Incarnate One unmake
> Who chose this form and fashion for our sake?

Where our major poets and dramatists have come back to the Christian Faith, they take the shop-soiled, familiar words, patterns, and characters, and bring them to life again. Consider, for example, how vividly Christopher Fry enters into the riches of the Biblical characters in his play *A Sleep of Prisoners*, or how Eliot probes the motives and temptations of Christian men in *Murder in the Cathedral*, or how Auden seizes upon the contemporary relevance of people like Herod, the Shepherds, the Wise Men, in his *For the Time Being*. No preacher can study the poets' handling of these and other characters without receiving new and profound insights into characters he has long taken for granted.

But we shall miss much of the contribution of modern poetry if we confine ourselves to the avowedly Christian or religious writers. If we are to speak to the condition of modern man we must know the questions he is asking and the form in which he is asking them. To understand these questions, to know where the shoe pinches, poets as seemingly anti-religious or as pagan as Hugh MacDiarmid and Dylan Thomas are as necessary to us as the others, for each in his own way high-lights some major concern of the men and women with whom we deal. Both MacDiarmid and Dylan Thomas see their work as 'a struggle for man,' a literature of protest against the forces that strangle his growth and that prevent him reaching his full development. Both, whatever their labels, are essentially 'religious' writers. Indeed, has not MacDiarmid written

> Let fools think science has supplanted poetry,
> Rationalism, religion. Even physically
> The older parts are more than holding their own.
> The fools are liars to their own anatomy . . .
> Who reasons well knows all too well
> That an unseen tide now and again
> Lifts into consciousness far greater truths
> Than reason itself can attain.
>
> (Thalamus, *Stony Limits*, 30)

As for Thomas, I do not think that any preacher who is seriously concerned with the problems and perplexities of adolescence can afford to be unaware of the insights the young Thomas voices in such early poems as 'I see the boys of summer in their ruin' or 'The force that through the green fuse drives the flower.' In any case, despite the tragedy of his own personal life, Dylan Thomas regarded himself as a religious poet without qualification. 'I write my poems for the love of man and to the glory of God,' he declared, and this is no idle boast. His work is full of lovely human compassion and of grateful wonder.

Mallarmé once declared that the poet's task was 'to purify the dialect of the tribe.' Preachers, whose trade is so much concerned with words, need again and again to purify the words they are forced to use, words that have become soiled with much handling. No one can read the poetry of T. S. Eliot without seeing that Mallarmé's words have taken hold of his mind, and that this purification of the dialect is one of his chief concerns. *The Four Quartets* is full of it. He longs, in *Little Gidding*, for

> The word neither diffident nor ostentatious,
> An easy commerce of the old and the new,
> The common word exact without vulgarity,
> The formal word, precise but not pedantic,
> The complete consort, dancing together.

No preacher with a high sense of his preaching office can read Eliot's words in *The Four Quartets* without fellow-feeling.

> So here am I in the middle way, having had twenty years . . .
> Trying to learn to use words, and every attempt
> Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure
> Because one has only learnt to get the better of words
> For the thing one no longer has to say . . .
> And so each venture is
> A new beginning, a raid on the inarticulate
> With shabby equipment always deteriorating
> In a general mess of imprecision of feeling.

Apart from any other consideration, let the preacher ponder this one: that for great numbers of thoughtful and inquiring spirits to-day, the Church seems to have no attraction, and many, especially of the younger sort, are turning to the poets for wisdom-about-life. It behoves the man in the pulpit to be aware of his fellow-workers in different parts of the vineyard, and to link up with them wherever possible. If we, in the same humble spirit as a Gabriel Marcel, study the writings of the major writers of our time, it will not only add to our own enrichment and wisdom, not only to our grasp of the world in which men live and struggle, it will spur us on to forsake what all too often becomes spiritual and moral nagging for real preaching, that is the confrontation of a deeply explored situation with a passionately held Answer.

Devotional and Pastoral Classics

George Herbert's 'The Country Parson'

By Principal C. Leslie Mitton, Ph.D., Handsworth College, Birmingham

A treasure which we have found for ourselves is usually more deeply valued than one of which we know by universal acclaim. Perhaps that is the explanation of my own special affection for this little book by George Herbert, generally known as *The Country Parson*, but sometimes, most disconcertingly, published under another name.

I happened to stumble upon this great little book at a time in my life when I should already have been long familiar with it, but when in fact it was still unknown to me. It was in the early years of my ministry. I was moving from one appointment to another and taking the opportunity to prune my collection of books, firmly discarding those which were no longer likely to serve a useful purpose on my shelves. As I packed, I found in my hands an old shabby volume in covers of dark green decorated with very faded gilt designs. It was only with difficulty that I was able to read the title: 'Herbert and Heber's Poetical Works.' Curiously enough I had no recollection of having seen it before, and no idea how it had found its way into my study. Its appearance was so woebegone that it is doubtful, if it had been on a second-hand stall, whether any one would have been willing to accept it even as a gift. It was clearly just the kind of book to be dispensed with on the occasion of a removal. Moreover I knew nothing about the authors which was sufficient to make me anxious to keep a volume outwardly so unattractive. Bishop Heber had, of course, written half-a-dozen well-known hymns, and Herbert some religious poems of a somewhat elaborate and complicated nature, but anything of value which they had written seemed likely to be readily available in a more up-to-date and pleasing binding. The book was clearly doomed to be sacrificed to the so-called 'salvage drive.'

Before pronouncing on it, however, the final verdict of banishment, idly and without expectation I flicked over its pages, as one might try to show some parting courtesy to one whose request is going to be turned down. It was with surprise that I noticed that this book of 'Poetical Works' contained a considerable section of prose. This was under the name of Herbert and bore the curious title: 'A Priest to the Temple.' I had not even heard of this, and it was only later that I learned that this was just an earlier name for what later became quite famous under the more familiar title: *The Country Parson*. The opening sentence caught my eye: 'A Pastor is the deputy of Christ for the reducing of man to the obedience of God.' Suddenly my interest was wide awake. A book which could open on such a striking note must surely hold other good things in store. The verdict of doom was repealed. So far from joining the books destined for salvage, it was carefully placed among the much smaller, more select company of those to be made immediately available for use in the new manse; and in the weeks that followed, in spite of the very shabby clothes it wore, it provided a constant supply of spiritual joy and illumination.

As the title suggests, it is about the work of the minister. It is true that it was written for conditions that prevailed more than three hundred years ago. It assumes for the parson a social status and a power to command his parishioners which is not applicable to ministers and clergy to-day. But the greater part of the book 'speaks to our condition' to-day no less faithfully than to that of Herbert's contemporaries. The fundamental function of the parson is forced home upon the reader in many striking phrases: 'The Parson is in God's stead to his parish.' 'Parsons are souls' waggoners.' 'The Parson is a lover and exciter to justice.'

In the section on the preparation of the Parson for his vocation, Herbert protests against the idea that when a man has 'read the Fathers or the Schoolmen, a minister is made and the thing done.' He continues: 'The greatest and hardest preparation is within.' He speaks severely about the parson who, with an eye on promotion or preferment, fails to give his whole attention to the care of the people immediately in his care or withholds necessary rebuke or admonition to evil-doers in positions of influence. Such a man shares with Judas the guilt of 'selling his Lord and Master.'

Herbert insists on the importance of preaching. 'The Country Parson preacheth constantly, the pulpit is his joy and his throne.' And he has wise counsel to offer about the manner and the material of preaching. He pleads for simplicity and homeliness in the pulpit. 'Sometimes,' he writes, the Parson 'tells them stories, and sayings of others, . . . for them also men heed, and remember better than exhortations; which, though earnest, yet

often die with the sermon.' Also, 'he condescends even to the knowledge of tillage and pasturage, and makes great use of them in teaching, because people by what they understand are best led to what they understand not.' 'They say it is an ill mason that refuseth any stone; and there is no knowledge, but in a skilful hand, serves either positively as it is or else to illustrate some other knowledge.' Again: 'Things of ordinary use are not only to serve in the way of drudgery, but to be washed and cleansed, and serve for lights even of heavenly truths.' Thus 'by familiar things he might make his doctrine slip the more easily into the hearts even of the meanest.'

While, however, he welcomes the homely touch in the sermon, he deplores anything which even remotely approaches flippancy in the preacher. 'The character of his sermon is holiness; he is not witty, or learned, or eloquent, but holy.' His hearers should be able to recognize that every word he speaks is 'heart-deep.' He uses 'earnestness of speech, it being natural to men to think that where is much earnestness there is much worth hearing.' Herbert also insists that preaching should instruct as well as inspire, and that two qualities should be looked for in a sermon, 'the one informing, the other inflaming.' Even more important than the parson's sermon, however, is his conduct of public prayer: 'No sermon moves men so much to reverence as a devout behaviour in the very act of praying.'

Much in this book is particularly applicable to the minister, but words of homely wisdom abound, many of which are also of significance for every one who seeks to live the Christian life. 'Nothing is little in God's service,' he writes. 'God's goodness strives with man's refractoriness. Man would sit down at this world; God bids him sell it and purchase a better.' The sins he speaks most vehemently against are 'luxury and covetousness' among the rich, and idleness in both rich and poor. 'Idleness is twofold, the one in having no calling, the other in walking carelessly in our calling.' He is not content merely to pillory evil things. He commends the good qualities we should aspire after. 'The two highest points of life, wherein a Christian is most seen, are patience and mortification; patience in regard of afflictions, mortification in regard of lusts and affections.' 'There is no greater sign of holiness than the procuring and rejoicing in another's good.' He deplores the caution and prudence which restrain a man from boldly obeying the dictates of conscience: 'Do well and right,' he proclaims, 'and let the world sink.'

The seriousness and importance of the minister's work is emphasized, but he is not required to be continually solemn. Winsomeness, good humour and pleasantness of disposition are to be greatly commended. They are 'of great use' and 'a great key to do good.' 'Instructions seasoned with pleasantness, both enter sooner, and root deeper.' Laughter and innocent fun have their rightful place, and 'mirth, whither the nature of man, loving refreshment, gladly betakes itself.'

The most practical and mundane concerns of life receive his attention, and some of his counsels may sound in our ears somewhat quaint, though probably none the less wise for that. The choice of a wife is to be 'made rather by ear than by eye'; the minister's 'judgment, not his affection, finds out a fit wife for him, whose humble, and liberal disposition he prefers before beauty, riches, or honour.' He urges a proper limit on the length of sermons, though not the length our modern taste demands: 'The Parson exceeds not an hour in preaching, because all ages have thought that a competency, and he that profits not in that time, will less afterwards.' Several pages of advice are given on the way to dispense medicines and other cures, and instructions on the treatment of beggars. We are told how to use natural calamities in order to awaken men's fear and so lead them to Christian behaviour and belief. He speaks with humble and grateful appreciation of the good food that poultry and pigs provide for man's table, and sees in it a special instance of God's good providence for His human children: 'These save man the labour and doing that which either he could not do, or was not fit for him to do, by taking all sorts of food into them, and as it were dressing and preparing it for man in themselves, by growing themselves fit for his table.' So man's waste and refuse is turned by them into wholesome food for man's good.

Here, then, we find much practical wisdom, and a simple homely piety, and a high ideal of the vocation of the parson, all expressed in unusual and memorable turns of phrase. Besides the subjects already touched upon, there are sections on prayer and sacraments, hospitality and work, repentance and Holy Scripture, and much beside. The last chapter is reserved for a sad comment on the customary topics of conversation, and a sigh of regret that people so frequently 'make others' faults their entertainment and discourse.' In fact 'it seems the very life and substance of their Conversation.' That was three hundred years ago. How far has human nature changed in that time?

It is curious to discover that this pastoral classic was written by a man who died before the age of forty and who did not enter Holy Orders till he was thirty-seven. In his earlier years Herbert had aimed at a career in politics, and enjoyed the social life of Court circles. He himself came of aristocratic family, and won some success in

academic circles, having been appointed Orator at Cambridge University. But he was not to find peace of heart in these pursuits. A poem written when he was an undergraduate, aged seventeen, reveals his awareness of the claims of God upon human life and his uneasiness at the way those claims are commonly disregarded. These claims asserted themselves irresistibly when he reached the age of thirty-four. He resigned his post as Orator and retired from public life. For three years he remained in solitude. It was not till 1630, when only three years of life remained to him, that he was ordained and was appointed to a country parish near Salisbury.

This means that his *Country Parson* was not written out of long experience, offering us the wisdom derived from a life's ministry. Rather it is the programme and aspiration of a young man, bent on so spending his remaining years as a parson as to make up for what he felt were the wasted years of the past. No doubt observation of the characteristics of others, those whose ministries he had either admired or despised, helped much to shape the pattern he here sets before himself and any others whom it may help, but the primary aim of his words is to draw up a plan of campaign for his own life's work. It is himself to whom he speaks in counsel or rebuke, and we are privileged to hear an honest man pleading with himself to be a true and faithful servant of God and pastor of God's people. The short preface to the book makes all this clear. He writes there: 'Being desirous (through the mercy of God) to please him, for whom I am, and live, and who giveth me my desires and performances; and considering with myself, that the way to please him is to feed my flock diligently and faithfully, since our Saviour hath made that the argument of a Pastor's love, I have resolved to set down the form and character of a true Pastor, that I may have a mark to aim at: which also I will set as high as I can, since he shoots higher that threatens the moon, than he that aims at a tree. Not that I think, if a man do not all which is here expressed, he presently sins, and displeases God, but that it is a good strife to go as far as we can in pleasing him, who hath done so much for us.'

Here in this book then is 'a mark to aim at,' an invitation to take our share in the 'good strife to go so far as we can in pleasing him who hath done so much for us.' It is a book worthy to be read slowly, and re-read, and marked so that its most relevant passages may be remembered, for, as Richard Baxter said of him, here is one who 'speaks to God like one that really believeth in God, and whose business in this world is most with God.'

In the Study

Virginibus Puerisque

Leaving Your Mark

By H. F. Mathews, M.A., Ph.D., Alsager, Cheshire

'And it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.'—Is 55^{13}.

On TV recently there was a programme about fingerprints. It was a bit disconcerting to learn from an expert that no two sets of fingerprints are alike, and that we cannot touch anything without leaving those tell-tale marks on it. So they are bound to catch us in the end!

But it doesn't need fingerprints. If I have a pile of exercise books, I can generally tell which is Snuffkins' by the dog-eared corners and Windcliffe-Hampton's by the long, wordy sentences which mean nothing at all. If I see a scrap going on by the bus stop after school, I know who is there before I am close enough to see his face. And if, on the bus, I see some one rise politely to give his seat to a lady with a basket, I can usually name him without seeing who he is. The fact is that we all leave our marks a hundred times a day.

Some few people have the unhappy knack of riling us every time we come into their company. But there are other people whose presence seems to give us new courage, new hope, new goodness. At one time I used to meet once or twice a week a blind man who was a member of the Society of Friends. I never met him without going on my way a little humbler and a little stronger. He left his mark upon me.

That was the wonder of Jesus. The ordinary Jew of His time would have made the Syrophoenician woman feel that she was no more than a Gentile dog: Jesus made her feel that God loved both her and her sick daughter. He could bring fresh hope to a Samaritan woman who thought all the world was against her, new courage to Peter even after he had denied Him. In fact, in the Acts the one thing people noticed about the first Christians was that they had been with Jesus. He had left His mark upon them.

Some firms have a 'Trade Mark' upon their wares by which they can be identified—like the octopus on the Gloy bottle, or the design which

some publishers print on the flyleaf of their books. They are so sure that their products are good that they are ready to put their sign on them. It is sometimes suggested that, over the carpenter's shop at Nazareth, there may have been a wooden sign bearing the legend, 'My yokes are easy.' That is no more than a guess from the word of Jesus. But it is certain that, if anyone in Galilee wanted the best article of furniture he could buy for his house or his farm, he would go to the shop of Jesus-ben-Joseph. The Proprietor there scorned anything unworthy or badly made. In the same way, His followers ought to be ashamed to leave a botched job, or an unfriendly remembrance.

The Trent and Mersey Canal meanders through my part of the country, and the other day I was wandering along its towpath with a friend. As we came to the quaint hump-backed bridges which carry farm roads across the water here and there, he said, 'Do you notice those stones?' For the first time I saw that each of the red sandstone blocks of which the bridges were built bore a small chiselled mark. One was like a game of noughts and crosses, another was a letter P with a stroke through it, and there were many more. 'Those were the masons' marks,' my friend explained. Each craftsman who cut stones for those century-old bridges was so proud of his workmanship that he could put his own sign on it. He knew it would stand true and firm, and he was not ashamed to show whose it was.

In another way, you and I are building bridges all the time between earth and heaven. We hope that folk will find their way across them. And, since our marks will be upon them—'an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off'—let us see that they are structures of which we have no need to be ashamed.

The Naughty Elephants

By Rita F. Snowden, Vice-President of the Methodist Church, New Zealand

Do you have an animal friend—a cat, a dog? Most boys and girls do. I want to tell you about a boy in Cornwall who loved animals. His first animal friend was a donkey. He loved his donkey, and though it wandered away on to the moors, he always knew where to find it, and how to get it back.

Then war came—and he was big enough to be a soldier—and they put him into the Camel Corps. So his next friend among the animals was a camel. It didn't take his officers long to see that he was good with animals. And next they made him a Transport Officer, in charge of mules.

But his best adventure happened after the War—in Burma. In that hot, jungle country he got a job with elephants. In Burma, elephants are used to drag great teak logs out of the jungle. Teak is one of the world's best hard-woods. It grows high up in such steep mountainous parts that, unless elephants bashed their way through the jungle forests and dragged out the logs, it would be hard to get them out at all. But the elephants enjoy their work, and drag down the great logs, and with their trunks build them into rafts, so that they can be floated down the rivers to Rangoon or Mandalay.

It is hard work, and the jungle is very hot, so the elephants need lots of rests—and though they have Burmese boys, 'oozies,' to sit on their necks and drive them, they need a good master to take care of them. And that was the job of the young man who had been a boy in Cornwall—who by now went by the nickname, 'Elephant Bill.'

He loved his elephants and it didn't take the elephants long to know that they had a good master. Some of them were old and wise, but some had been born in the jungle camp, and had never known any other life. They were happy there—smashing through the jungle, looking for nice green things to eat, or bathing in the warm water-holes—splashing each other like noisy, happy boys at play.

But there were lots of things for young elephants to learn. It didn't take them long; and 'Elephant Bill' and his boys would harness them up. Then, with their little wooden panniers—kind of baskets on their backs—and their strong ropes twisted from the bark of jungle trees, they were ready to help. That was a proud moment.

But sometimes—rather like boys—when work was over, and they were let out, they got up to tricks. In a book he wrote, 'Elephant Bill' told of some of their tricks. Every elephant was given a bell to hang round its neck, so that when it wandered off into the jungle, to look for juicy young leaves, it could be found again. The tinkle of the bell—and each elephant's bell tinkled a slightly different note—told where it was. And the old, wise working elephants liked that. But some of the young elephants would plug up the little bells, that hung round their necks, with good stodgy mud, so that the clappers couldn't ring. Then they would steal into a grove of cultivated bananas at night, and have a wonderful time. But the morning always revealed the damaged grove—the fruit eaten, and the young leaves broken down—and then there was trouble for everybody.

God, of course, hasn't given us a little bell to hang round our necks—but He has given us something more wonderful, called a conscience. It is like a little bell within us—helping us to do the right instead of the wrong. And when we want to

know what to do, it tells us quite clearly—unless, like the naughty young elephants, we silence it. But that leads to trouble for everybody. Our conscience, like the little bell, is to help us.

Paul knew about this : and in a letter he wrote to his young friend, Timothy, he linked *a pure heart, and good conscience* (1 Ti 1[5]). And, always, for those of us who are young and seek happiness, they go together.

The Christian Year

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

The Paradoxes of our Ministry [1]

IV. 'As chastened, and not killed'

BY THE REVEREND DOUGLAS STEWART, M.A., LONDON

1. The aspiration of modern man can be put in two words, it is for a painless existence. The secret, unspoken, prayer of the heart is that we may live and die without suffering. The hidden motive behind many of our political and economic idealisms is to be discovered here. Both 'peace' and 'welfare' have millions of partisans in all continents to whom these great words have no positive meaning whatsoever, but for whom they stand for an absence of what they dislike, an absence of pain. We desire peace, not because it is right to be at peace, but because it is painful to be at war. The unconscious search to-day is for the perfect anaesthetic against life and against death.

Modern man, then, refuses to be chastened. Here once more his natural wisdom resists the wisdom of Christ. We are 'as chastened, and not killed.' He seeks to be 'unchastened,' to escape every form of suffering, physical, mental or spiritual.

A clever American called Eugene Rosenstock-Hussey wrote a book some years ago entitled *The Christian Future* in which he analysed the conflict between Christianity and Modernism at this point. He picked out the suburb as being the typical product of our time, and he tried to assess the motives behind suburbia. The suburb is not a city but an escape from the crowded squalors and from the civic responsibilities of the city. Nor is the suburb a village, but an escape from the intimate social network of the village with its constant demands for personal contact and response. We shake off both what irks us in city life and in village life, and we build ourselves suburbs—areas of limited responsibility, of limited personal contact—where we can be free of all pain.

Around the suburb we build the institutions which preserve its peace. There is the maternity home to muffle the cries of child-birth. There is the hospital to relieve us of the sight of suffering. There is the asylum in which are hidden the mentally deranged. There is the crematorium which deals with our last remains. The suburban child can grow to manhood without having encountered birth, pain, madness or death. And indeed his suburban parents consider it a good thing that he should be shielded from such experiences.

We are all so conditioned by this way of life that we are scarcely aware of how unchristian it is. But, as Rosenstock-Hussey insists, there is no place for the Church in the suburb. Here we preach of rejection and reviling, the scourging of the Son of God, of wounds and blood and violence and death. All this is utterly foreign to the mind of our time. 'Chastening' is the last thing men seek.

And yet, by a curious paradox, this age of ours which so loathes suffering, which so longs to escape suffering, which so organizes itself against suffering, must be reckoned also one of the great ages of suffering. From the appalling misery of trench warfare between 1914 and 1918 to the nightmare of Belsen and a hundred other places of horror the story unfolds. Our search for peace and comfort plunges us deeper and deeper in fear and pain. The Christian is 'chastened, and not killed.' Our age is 'killed, but unchastened.' This is something to be examined.

2. One searching examination has been made by a non-Christian mind in Mr. Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. There our prayer for painlessness is seen as answered. Children are born from bottles ; they are then conditioned psychologically from birth to fit into society without frustration ; everything is foreseen that could harm us, and is avoided. The result is, as Mr. Huxley's savage immediately sees, the loss of humanity, the loss of the soul. The unchastened dream life of man is empty of all meaning and significance. St. Paul's paradox is more close-knit than we realize. Without chastening we are killed. Life becomes nothing.

Miss Dorothy Sayers has approached the same truth from quite a different angle. She is discussing why Dante put the noble pagans of antiquity in hell, and she writes : 'To the great heathen Dante has allotted just that beatitude which they were able to imagine for themselves. Dante . . . could not have let Virgil and the other great pagans into the Christian heaven without making nonsense of their work.

'Beautiful and peaceful, pathetic and fatigued, "all passion spent," it is only the upper circle of an

[1] A sermon in this series—the Paradoxes in 2 Co 6[8-10]—will appear each month.—Ed.

immense despair . . . The endless games, the shining phantom horses, the odes and the choric measures are touched with the eternal futility, the eternal melancholy of Hell.'

There is the unveiling of the pathetic fallacy in the modern approach to life. This painless existence of which we dream is 'the upper circle of an immense despair.' The games, the arts, the techniques are touched with 'the eternal futility of Hell.' Out of the depths beneath rises the cry of the tortured and of the despairing.

3. Suffering, like death, must be faced. Suffering, like death, must be accepted. When it is faced and accepted its character is utterly changed. It becomes 'chastening.' It is received not at the hands of man, nor through the indifference of the universe, but from the hand of God.

An immense volume of suffering is futile—it constitutes 'the problem of suffering'—because it has no reference beyond man or beyond human purpose. But it was not for nothing that the Passion was endured by Christ and the Cross set up in history. Here is the place of redemption. And from that how the inexplicable sufferings of men found a centre, a focus, and a meaning. These early Christians knew themselves to be playing a part in the eternal drama of redemption whose centre was Christ. 'We rejoice in tribulations also.' We are 'as chastened, and not killed.' 'I fill up what remains of the suffering of Christ.'

There is a real sense in which this cannot be conveyed by preaching but only by experience. And yet preaching can point to 'the marks of the Cross' and the glory they leave in human life.

In a recent B.B.C. Schools' Broadcast the Rev. John Taylor tells of a young English farmer, brought up as an unthinking agnostic who at the age of eighteen came across the Gospels. 'It was like a new life,' he wrote, 'I desire only to work and to serve. I need no money reward, but my food, clothes and shelter.' He emigrated to Southern Rhodesia and worked there as a labourer. He was the first white man in Rhodesia to work under an African boss and to live on an African labourer's wage. After his death an African in the Federal Parliament paid him this tribute. 'He had overcome the bounds of race and colour and had shown Christ by the example of his life.' A white resident understood the meaning of this life of chastening. 'He wasn't writing letters to the papers about the oppression of the black people; he didn't preach sermons against South Africa to urge it to become Christian; he didn't make flying visits to Africa and return to pose as an expert. What he did seemed to me stronger and more positive. He lived among black men in friendship, in mutual regard and affection and in brotherly love.'

'We are chastened, and not killed.'

Seeing the glory of the Cross in another man's life, however, has its own spiritual danger. It tempts us to imitation, and it tempts us to imagination. John Donne, the great seventeenth century Dean of St. Paul's, has a sermon in which he warns us against the attempt to lift another man's cross and follow Christ. Each man must bear his own cross, the cross laid upon him by temperament, by time, and by circumstance. I must carry my cross. So often I imagine a different cross. So often I envy another man his cross. So often I conceive the cross to be something which will lead me to fame. Sometimes I am a martyr to my own self-imposed cross. None of these activities is 'taking up my cross.'

My cross is not that for which I pray, but that from which I pray. I pray for deliverance from 'this body,' 'this death,' 'this time,' 'this duty,' 'this cup.' Yet in receiving and in bearing—in opening my life to its 'chastening'—it becomes for me the way of life.

Third Sunday after Epiphany

For One Alone

By the Reverend William Barclay, D.D., Glasgow

'It seemed good to me also . . . to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.'—Lk $1^{3,4}$.

'The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus.'—Ac 1^{1}.

It would be very difficult to name two more important books than the Gospel according to St. Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. It might well be said that Luke's Gospel is the first critical life of Jesus ever to be written, for Luke begins by claiming that he has examined the sources, and has set down that which is certain. Renan called Luke's Gospel the loveliest book in the world. It is told that an American student once asked James Denney to recommend to him a life of Jesus, and that Denney answered gravely: 'Have you read the one that Luke wrote?' Had Luke not written we would never have known the story of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, the Woman who was a Sinner, the Lost Coin, the Song of the Angels, the Coming of the Shepherds. There must be millions of people who owe their souls to the Gospel which Luke wrote. As for the Book of Acts, it might fairly be claimed that it is the most important history book ever to be written, for, without it, we would know absolutely nothing of the history of the Early Church, apart from

what we could laboriously piece together from the letters of Paul. It is our sole authority, and our one source of information, for the great formative days of the life of the Church. *And the extraordinary thing is that both these books were written for one person.* They were not initially written for a world, or a nation, or even a Church; they were written for a man called Theophilus.

And herein is something which is universally true. The greatest and the most lasting work is not work which is done for crowds and masses of people; it is work which is done for single individual men and women.

1. *Sometimes that some one is a man's own self.* We do not for one moment mean that a man produces great work if he is working for his own fame, and profit, and prestige and personal aggrandisement. What we do mean is this. There is one judgment and one verdict which a man cannot escape—and that is his own. He may evade the judgment of others; he may disregard it, and refuse to face it; but he cannot evade his own judgment. Only a man himself knows the value of his own productions, and there is nothing more shaming and humiliating than to be praised and thanked and complimented for something which one knows that one has pushed through anyhow, and which is not even one's second best.

Once President Grant of the United States of America was offered a way of making money which was not strictly honest. It was pointed out to him that it was often done; it was pointed out to him that, in any event, no one would know. 'One man will know,' he answered. 'President Grant will know and I've got to sleep with him.' If a man cannot face his own judgment, then life becomes intolerable. The end is always tragedy when a man cannot say: 'This was my best.'

2. *Sometimes that some one is a parent.* Some of us will remember our school and college days. To us marks and class places and the like did not matter very much, for life was not very responsible then. But we wished to do well because we knew that at home a father's or a mother's eyes would light up when he or she heard of our success. It was a thrilling day when we received our first pay. It was still more thrilling to take it home. It was the greatest thrill of all to buy with it something which a parent had always longed for, but could never afford.

It is told that one day Robert Louis Stevenson was poring over a book of press-cuttings about his own books. 'Well,' he was asked jestingly, 'is fame all that it is cracked up to be?' 'Yes,' said Stevenson gravely, 'when I see my mother's eyes.' It was not for his own sake, but for the sake of a parent who believed in him, that he was glad to have done well.

As we grow older, our greatest grief is the memory of how we grieved our parents, and our greatest joy is the memory of how we brought them joy. That is something we might well remember while we still possess them.

3. *Sometimes that some one is the person whom a man loves.* It is an amazing thing to think of how much of the world's great work would never have been done if some one had not fallen in love. The lyrics of the great poets were not exercises in metrical ingenuity; they were written to single flesh and blood people. The songs, for instance, of Robert Burns are the possession of the world, but they began by being addressed to single people with whom the poet had fallen in love. They were originally written for one alone.

At one time in his life Schubert was music master in the household of a great Austrian nobleman. He was at the time pouring out his immortal music. There was a daughter in the house, and Schubert loved her; but, since he possessed nothing but his genius, he could never tell his love. But she knew how it was with his heart; and one day she said to him: 'Why is it that although you dedicate your music to many people you never dedicate a piece of music to me?' 'My dear,' said Schubert, 'I don't need to, for everything I write is written for you.' Hundreds of thousands of people have listened to that music—but in the beginning it was meant for one alone.

It is the simple fact of life that there are many who remain in the ways of goodness, not because of fear of the law, not even because of the hope of heaven or the dread of hell, but simply because they could not meet the sorrow in some one's eyes, if they made shipwreck of this life.

4. And there is some one for whom all things must be done—*and that some one is Jesus Christ.* It can never be said too often that Christianity does not consist of belief in a creed; it does not even consist in membership of a Church; it consists in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. When Jesus came to men He did not say: 'I have certain theological propositions which I would like you to discuss. I have certain philosophical ideas and social schemes which I would like to set before you.' He said: 'Follow me!'

Now that invitation was not only for our sakes; it was for His sake too. We hear a great deal about the might and the majesty and the power of Jesus Christ—as indeed is right. We hear a great deal of the lordship and the kingship of Jesus Christ—as indeed is right. But in a very real sense there is such a thing as the helplessness of Christ. If Jesus Christ wants a child taught, a sufferer healed, a sad person comforted, that teaching, that healing, that comfort has to come through human

agency—and it can never come unless some one will take it.

We have set the phrase *a servant of Christ* in far too narrow limits. By it we too often mean a minister of religion, or some one who is engaged in full-time 'religious' work, in the commonly accepted sense of that term. But the aim of Christ is total salvation—the welfare of men's bodies and souls. And therefore any man or woman who is doing any useful work in this world is serving Christ. The doctor who cures men's bodies, the farmer who grows men's food, the schoolmaster who teaches children's minds, the baker who bakes our bread, all those who are engaged in the necessary work of bringing all useful human products to our home and to our table, the mother caring for her children—all are serving Christ. This indeed is the basic Christian doctrine of work; and this alone is the solution for all the tangled problems which work produces. We do not work for a master on earth, or for pay, or for prestige, we work for Jesus Christ.

All great work is done for some one person. Luke long ago wrote his books for his friend Theophilus. To this day the finest work is done to satisfy the claims of self-respect, and of filial duty, and of love. But even if a man had no one on earth to work for, he still has Jesus Christ. George Herbert was right:

> Teach me, my God and King,
> In all things Thee to see;
> And what I do in anything,
> To do it as for Thee!
>
> A servant with this clause
> Makes drudgery divine:
> Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
> Makes that and the action fine.

It has been truly said that consecration is that which makes drudgery divine; and consecration means that Jesus Christ is the One alone for whom we work.

SEPTUAGESIMA

The Forgiving King

BY THE REVEREND CHRISTA FREIBURG, VICARIN OF THE GERMAN-SPEAKING CONGREGATION, GLASGOW

'Until seventy times seven.'—Mt 18^{22}.

Jesus was discussing the problems of the parish with His disciples when Peter raised the question of forgiveness. They were facing the problem of the weak, and the stubborn, and how to treat them. Jesus was stressing the almost frightening power which His followers would wield, but at the same time He promised them also His godly help, He assured those who relied on Him of His own presence. I think He had to do that, otherwise His disciples might have feared to belong to this Jesus who had already spoken twice about His death and yet asked of them such great things.

It was then, it was when Jesus was concerned about the life of the Christian community, that Peter came, saying, 'Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?' I'm sure Peter thought he had understood his Lord. In Jewish teaching people were asked to forgive three times. You can read examples in Jewish literature of wise rabbis declaring 'If a man commits an offence once you forgive him, a second time you forgive him, a third time you forgive him, the fourth time you do not forgive him.' Peter now, thinking about the Christian fellowship, had realized that there it should be different. Probably he thought he was going very far indeed when offering to forgive seven times, twice as often as the Jewish teaching required. But Jesus tells him, 'I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.'

We all realize what Jesus wanted to say by this. 'You shall forgive for ever and ever and ever, my dear Peter. Indeed, you ought to stop *counting* how often you were good and noble. If you are just going to count to seven instead of to three it doesn't make any difference. Don't you see that? It will be the same narrow morality, the same self-righteous anger, the same discord. You must forgive again and again, so often that at last you get completely out of your habit of counting.'

We, listening with Peter, might want to reply that to normal thinking this sounds impossible. You are quite right; it does go beyond our strength and it is unnatural thinking. But that is what we have to realize now and again—Christian thinking is not at all natural but completely against nature. As Christians we are always asked to do things which we, by ourselves, can't do and don't want to do—to forgive, seven times seven, was such a demand.

Even Peter, the famous courageous apostle, couldn't think of going so far with his Lord. Jesus knew that. He knew how against human nature it is to be forgiving, therefore He told the well-known parable of the Unforgiving Slave, or, to put it another way, the story of the forgiving king. This story, so familiar to our ears, must have sounded very strange to Peter. First of all the sum mentioned was so unusual. One thousand talents was such a vast sum of money that Peter and his contemporaries could not think of a king who would lend so much money, not even to his favourite counsellors, far less could they think of

one who could give it away as if it were nothing. It was a sum much higher than you would get as a selling price for a person's house and family. Then the servant's promise to repay his debts was really ridiculous. That was clear to the king, as it was clear to those who listened to the story, but yet the king gave freedom to the man. What is more, he made him free also in another sense; he made him free of the debtor's worry of being in the hands of a creditor who might use his rights against him at any time. Our king renounced his rights.

Really, this example given by Jesus does not fit very well into our life. We don't have the kind of kings who, for the sake of their subjects don't care for their own riches. There is only one king like this and He is not an earthly king.

Nor would we from our experience have thought about the sequel Jesus gave—would we? Even admitting that we are a poor lot altogether, I couldn't think of a person who would behave like our story's servant. On the contrary, I think the joy of such an unexpected gift would make everybody generous too. From where did Jesus get His picture of a man who, because of a hundred pence, laid his hands on his fellow, took him by the throat and had no patience with him at all, but cast him into prison until he should pay? Who is the servant of whom Jesus is speaking? Well, perhaps those of us who kept in mind that Jesus was not speaking of *any* king in the beginning may realize that now He is not speaking of *any* man either. Those of us, who felt there was only the king of heaven of whom Jesus could give such a picture, will feel there is only the Christian that can be compared with the forgetful, ungrateful servant. It is the *Christian* who is released from a debt which he never could pay off through all his life. We Christians, coming from forgiveness, go on expecting our neighbours to pay their full due, and condemn them when they cannot satisfy us.

It is also the very same Christian to whom the end of the parable applies. It is the unforgiving Christian who brings sorrow to his fellow-Christians and who turns the merciful king to wrath. Here Jesus is telling the disciples that God, who is filled with compassion for the debtor or sinner, can't stand the unforgiving Christian. This must have been a very alarming thought to Peter. It is just as alarming for us. Nevertheless, this alarming side is not the only side to the story. There is always an encouraging side in the gospel and there is one here. Jesus wanted to strengthen Peter by telling this parable. He wanted to bring forgiveness within reach by speaking of the rich God's loving-kindness. Keep this King in mind, He says, and what you owe Him. Keep in mind how much He has given to you; how much health and you don't care about it; what a lovely voice and you use it for scolding and gossiping more often than to sing His praise. The Heavenly King has given you a good home, but you couldn't always invite Him there. He has given you eyes to see His world's beauty, but you prefer to look for sensational things. He has given you strength, but you seldom let it work to His glory. He has given you His Sunday in which to rest and think of Him, but you don't use it that way. He has given you so many gifts for which you did nothing in return and now can never repay—what a terrible debt! But your Lord got you out of this hopeless position. Realize how lucky you are with such a rich and loving King. Can you ever forget Him?

In this way this parable was meant to be a friendly reminder to Peter, and to all of us, not to forget that our whole being is based on God's grace and to remember this, especially when others are in our debt. And it is important that He who reminds us is Jesus, who lived our human life. No doubt He knew what it is to be offended and to suffer wrong. He knew how cruel people can be and how bitter it is to fall into their hands. He knew about all the difficulties in one's own family. He knew about political insults. He suffered open enmity and secret deception to a far greater extent than we ever do. But yet He still insists on forgiving. Jesus doesn't believe that it should be impossible for those who base their lives in God's grace. He wouldn't ask it of the heathen, but He does ask it of His own people. Forgiving for Him is the result of accepting God's mercy. He wants us not only to feel the joy of being forgiven but also the joy of offering forgiveness, and He makes clear that we can't have one without the other.

We can't live any longer by God's great love if we don't want to show love to others. But on the other hand, and we should not forget this, we don't have to practise forgiveness out of our own strength. We shall be enabled to practise it as often and as long as we look at Him who was willing to take upon Himself all the burden of our debt.

SEXAGESIMA

A Sense of What is Vital

BY THE REVEREND G. PRESTON MACLEOD, D.D.,
CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA

'It is my prayer that your love may be more and more rich in knowledge and all manner of insight, enabling you to have a sense of what is vital.'—Ph $1^{9.10}$ (Moffatt).

The title is James Moffatt's rendering of the words in the King James version, 'approve what is excellent.' The literal meaning, as given in the margin, is 'things that differ.' The Apostle is

deeply concerned that Christians should have a discriminating judgment about the true values in life.

To the people in Rome and Philippi the Christians were conspicuous. They stood out. It was not merely because they were doctrinally different, but even more because they lived differently. The spirit of Christ created in them a different attitude and way of living day by day. 'Put off your old nature which belongs to your former manner of life . . . and put on the new nature created after the likeness of God.' Christians introduced a new standard into life—the standard of being Christ-like. It is universally honoured now—as a standard. We are a long way from it as an attainment. And we need to exalt and proclaim the standard anew. It has a lot to do with the way in which we shall be able to live our lives in personal conduct, in home and family life, in community and nation and in the world.

Christ brought a sense of what is vital into daily life.

1. *Basic Morality.* He brought basic morality to a pagan and frankly licentious world. The attitude to marriage and home in the ancient world was literally pagan. Disloyalty, infidelity, promiscuity on the part of husband and wife were common and accepted. Perhaps raised eyebrows were answered with an easy shrug, 'Well, that's the way it is with people.' 'Nothing can be done about it.' 'You know human nature.'

Christians did something about it—beginning with themselves. They introduced and established, against the whole trend of the times, the Christian standard of love and marriage, the strength and goodness of the Christian home. They made this standard respected and authoritative. They brought to the fore a new sense of what is vital.

If it is necessary to do it again, and there is plenty of evidence that such is the case, Christians can do it again, by God's grace. Against the laxity, against the pressure and trend of the times, against mistaken ideas of what is bold, emancipated, progressive, against semi-acceptance of what Dr. Kinsey reveals, as if that were all that one could expect of human nature, against all these things, Christians can, and must, re-assert and establish the basic morality of Christian love, and of the Christian home and family. And they must make it acceptable and attractive. Paul envisaged Christians as 'children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.'

In the matter of basic morality, 'it is my prayer that you may have a sense of what is vital.'

2. *Life Purpose.* Jesus brought a sense of what is vital to the goals and objectives which people strive for in life.

'Do nothing from selfishness or conceit,' says Paul a little later in this letter, 'but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.' Then follows the great passage about Christ being 'in the form of God' and emptying Himself to take the form of a servant.

One gets the impression in reading and hearing the vocational appeals which are made to youth to-day that the service motive is not exalted as once it was. A widespread campaign this fall to persuade young folk to stay in school and complete their education rang the changes on one note, 'You will get more money. You will earn a larger income.' The worth of education is frequently presented in terms of dollars and cents. The worth of a job likewise. That is important. Any one who remembers the great depression has that conviction burned into his memory. That is one side of it—*but only one side.* In current vocational appeals to youth there is all too often a lack of emphasis on service to the community, and less emphasis than should be on doing a job thoroughly, skilfully and well, simply because it is worth doing. The definitely service professions are crying out for recruits who will look for a large part of their satisfaction in the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the community and to the lives of their fellow-men.

It is still true that people find themselves, and their basic happiness and satisfaction in life, by doing something necessary, creative, valuable for the community to which they belong, or for society as a whole. In a materialistic and comfort-loving age this is still the law of mental, moral and spiritual health. 'Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.'

'It is my prayer that you may have a sense of what is vital' in the choice of life's goals.

3. *Self-Discipline.* Christ brings self-discipline into personal life. The old virtue needs to be restored to a foremost place again. 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,' said Paul. It may be questioned whether many people worry about their salvation with fear and trembling to-day. Certainly the psychiatrists and social workers and pastors are aware that a great many people worry themselves to distraction about many things. But multitudes also are at ease in their prosperity and grow to expect abundance as a birthright. Material comforts are at an all time high level, in this part of the Western world at any rate. Two-car garages, lavish luxury homes, fabulous give-away contests on radio and television, gigantic lotteries in one disguise or another, sweepstakes large and

small, all lull the ordinary man with the beguiling thought that good things come easy. Fantastic monetary rewards are given in quiz contests over the air, for obscure feats of photographic memory, out of all proportion to the slight value of these feats to the community. The something for nothing philosophy is dangled before the public on all sides. Glittering money prizes are offered more for luck than for effort. As a consequence, a soft, easy complacent attitude grows upon us.

We need to restore the basic ideal of an honest contribution to society for what we receive, before we receive it. Character, discipline, 'self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control' are still basic. Personal responsibility, the determination through faith and courage and Christian loyalty to handle our own lives wisely, and to solve our own problems creatively and rewardingly and in right relations with others, these things are the very root and fibre of wholesome character and stable society.

Our Lord's words still stand, 'Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.' Whether that is popular or unpopular, the man of Nazareth hews to the line of moral truth.

'This one thing I do,' said Paul again, 'I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' Our generation needs to be challenged and inspired to a like self-discipline. One never really finds his soul until he cries with all-out resolution, even, in stress, with desperation, 'This thing I will do, I will face the temptations, I will meet the conditions, I will make the necessary sacrifices, but I will come out on God's side in what I do with my life.' When one goes all out like that, by the miracle of grace God works in and through such determination 'both to will and to do of his good pleasure.'

It is my prayer that in the basic morality of personal conduct in the realm of love and marriage and home, in choosing a life purpose as well as choosing a job and in the self-discipline of accepted responsibility that makes a character, you may have a sense of what is vital in life.

QUINQUAGESIMA

Service without Stint

BY THE REVEREND H. A. HAMILTON, B.A., BRIGHTON

'The house was filled with the odour of the ointment. —Jn 12^3.

The sense of smell is not the most used, but it is probably the most potent, of our senses. Sight moves us when we care to look; smell steals on us unawares, or overwhelms us without chance of retreat. How pervasive are the gentle scents of a dewy evening; equally so is the appetising smell of a meal cooking in the kitchen.

Scents seem to seek out every corner and cling to every surface—and as they cling to the body, so they cling to the memory. Nostalgia has no better friend. No sooner do you smell, maybe pitch-pine or a floor polish than you are transported to a room. Is there a brackish tang in the air? You are riding far and swift to scenes never to be forgotten.

What a mystery scent is. How concentrated and secret its ways and how strange its continuous giving of itself. No wonder its associations have given it a place of worship. Small wonder, too, that the scent of spilled nard and the spilling of our Lord's life in the sacrifice could never be dissociated, nor, as our Lord said, ever shall!

Imagine the effect on Peter as some lady of fashion passed in the street in Rome, leaving a fragrance of nard as she passed! Nard came from a red spiked root. It was exceeding sweet and most rare and precious. Once before Peter had smelled it and then his heart, no less than his senses, was overwhelmed. He would never forget Mary, the notorious guest, going out from supper. She seemed conspicuous before, but he would never forget the look on her face as she walked back into the room. She was carrying a small vase or container of alabaster (that soft and figured stone was worthy of its store). By the way she carried it Peter could tell what a treasure it was. So a collector might take out a rare letter from a drawer or a book from the case, or a piece of old china from a cabinet, and hold it tenderly and with grave care. Then to his astonishment she held the vase one moment poised above the head of Jesus; the silence which held everyone in the room quite still was snapped by the breaking of the vase. Her eyes poured out devotion as the drops fell on the head of Jesus. Then the mutterings began: '£60 worth! It's a shame. It had better have been given to the poor.' The strong words of Jesus shamed the complaining hypocrites: and over all and through all the scent filled the house. Filled the house? Began to fill all the habitable world. The story so fragrant and memorable has something timeless to say to us about the nature of that offer we call worship and of the worship which is an offer of ourselves.

With what shall we worship? With the choicest form of words and music and action that we can find. We can understand that men have wanted to build a worthy house to God, to put on vestments and to burn incense. If we prefer simplicity in our worship, it is not because we fail to understand other men's desire to offer their utmost to

His highest in the best ways they can devise ; we fear, or so we say, to offer anything not in sincerity or truth, so we content ourselves with words, words sometimes with music and sometimes not. But every means of worship, whether it be ritual or whether it be words, has to be broken before it can be offered to God. A closed box cannot speak. Memorable speech is indeed strangely like an alabaster box of ointment, very precious. It contains in a concentrated form the essence of man's experiences. So when Shakespeare says,

Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither :
Ripeness is all

he is distilling for us the savour of his profound understanding of life, and telling us of the fulfilment which is only possible to those who have accepted death. Or when Blake says,

And we are put on earth a little space,
That we may learn to bear the beams of love

he is offering to us in the simplest words the deepest wisdom. Yet not until these magical words are broken open do they yield their scent.

Such is the speech of the Bible : ' Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love . . .' and such the language of the Prayer Book : ' We bless Thee for our creation, preservation and for all the blessings of this life. . . .' Memorable words are as finely grained as any alabaster vase. They are good to look upon and to repeat ; but no memorable words can be an act of worship until they are broken open so that we may pour out our gratitude. We shall use them aright only if, with all the effort of our mind and of the offering of ourselves, we make the words yield so that we may pour our homage out before the Lord.

Perhaps this story says even more to us about the nature of our service to God. All of us have our treasures stored away, memories of experiences of good and ill which have been transformed into our secret knowledge of life ; our humble gifts which we have found delight in using and which have brought us nearer to man and God. All have their little store which God has given and which life has trained. How easy it is to bring these treasures out to show them off—an enlargement of ourselves and of our love of praise. We tell our story to be heard of men ; we use our gifts to be seen of them and, so to speak, put our treasures safely back in the drawer. Has it ever happened to you that some one has gone to such a hiding-place and brought out an heirloom or prized possession and shown it to you with careful hands, and astonished you by saying : ' This is for you. I want you to keep it now ' ? Or has any one told you humbly and simply of some cherished memory, or some lesson learned in the valley of humiliation, and offered it to you in a time of your need ? There is about such giving a sense of intimacy that seems to bring us very close to God. That is the intimacy which is at the heart of this story.

We cannot serve God unless we are willing to break the mould. The symbol of our willingness to let go is the willingness to go to ' breaking-point.' No one who has known what it is to ' give and give and give again ' but has had would-be friends saying ' You must be near breaking-point ! ' Of course. There is no scent until the case is broken ; not in human service any more than human speech. It even seems sometimes as though God Himself breaks us to force us to let go. We do so closely guard ourselves. Yet there is no leadership that has not this quality of giving to breaking-point ; nor is there any love which has not learned that art. It is this quality of life for which a self-seeking time is waiting. If a world of confusion is ever to be filled with fragrance, it will be because humble men and women, whose only virtue is that they want to honour Christ, break open the mould and pour out their life in self-forgetfulness and praise.

Recent Foreign Theology

Islamic Studies. Professor Harris Birkeland has recently issued in English two studies in the field of Islamics. The first is on *Old Muslim Opposition against Interpretation of the Koran.*[1] This is written to contest the view of Goldziher that the passages in which the interpretation of the Koran is rejected require an unusual meaning for the word ' interpretation.' After a careful examination of all the evidence, Birkeland maintains that at first the interpretation of the Koran was regarded as a natural activity, but later it was rejected by some circles, partly on pietistic grounds (since it was felt that human reason should not presume to interpret the words of God), and partly to guard against heresy. Later, when rules to govern interpretation were laid down, all orthodox circles recognized its legitimacy.

The second study is on *The Legend of the Opening of Muhammed's Breast.*[2] This legend is found in

[1] Avhandlinger utgitt av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo, Hist.-Filos. Klasse [1955] No. 1 [1956]. (Dybwad, Oslo.)

[2] Avhandlinger, Hist.-Filos. Klasse [1955] No. 3. [1955]. (Dybwad, Oslo.)

many different forms, and is attributed to various periods in the career of the prophet. Against the view of some scholars that the original form linked it with the legend of the prophet's ascension to heaven, Birkeland maintains that the earliest form placed it in his infancy. By a careful study of the many forms of the legend and the form-critical analysis of them, and exposure of unassimilated traces of the older form in some, the author shows that originally the legend had nothing to do with the purification of the prophet, but with the search to find in him the quality which fitted him to become a prophet, and the claim that this was recognizable even in his childhood.

Old Testament Introduction. For more than twenty years Professor Otto Eissfeldt's *Introduction to the Old Testament* has had a unique place amongst works on this subject. He has now published a new and revised edition,[1] which will undoubtedly make it the standard work for many more years. The new work is nearly two hundred pages longer than the old, and both in its bibliographies and in other respects it has been brought thoroughly up to date. There is an entirely new section on the Dead Sea Scrolls, extending to some forty pages. The former edition had already included a section on the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, but this is the first work on Old Testament Introduction to give so much attention to the newly found texts of this class. Professor Eissfeldt is a scholar of the first water, whose wide knowledge is matched with a balanced judgment, and there can be few scholars who are more widely esteemed throughout the world. His work is an indispensable tool, which should be in every theological library.

The Enoch Tradition. A Dutch doctoral dissertation, presented at Utrecht by C. P. van Andel, is devoted to the study of the Structure of the Enoch Tradition and the New Testament.[2] There is a very full summary in English—sometimes slightly quaint English, though happily the meaning is always clear. The author offers a careful study of the various sections of 1 Enoch, and shows how the figure of Enoch is related to the group from which the work comes. He then passes to the study of Jubilees, The Testaments, the Zadokite Fragments, and the Dead Sea Scrolls, and shows the intimate links which bind these works together. He wisely refrains from claiming that all of these works came from a single sect, though he maintains that mutual contact between the groups is to be recognized. Next he reviews the various theories that have been advanced as to the relation between the figure of Enoch and the Son of Man, and finally turns to the Enoch Tradition and the New Testament. Here he shows that whereas the figure of Enoch arose from the community of the saints, in the New Testament the community of the Church grew out of the person of Jesus. The whole is a careful and valuable contribution to scholarship.

Babylon and the Old Testament. In the excellent little series of *Cahiers d'Archéologie Biblique*, André Parrot has produced a new volume dealing with Babylon and the Old Testament.[3] In the first chapter he reviews the history of the exploration of Babylon, and the abundant illustrations show the plans of excavated temples and other buildings, together with reconstructions and surviving monuments. The author then surveys the relations between Babylon and Israel, as they can be pieced together from the Old Testament and Babylonian sources. His work is thoroughly up-to-date, and utilizes the Wiseman tablets for the years preceding the fall of Jerusalem in 597 B.C., as well as the Jehoiachin tablets published just before the War by Weidner and the Lachish letters relating to the time just before the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. There are chronological tables and a good bibliography, and the whole is excellently adapted to its purpose to mediate to a wide circle of readers the significance of archaeological research for the understanding of the Old Testament.

Elijah. The Elijah saga has been studied many times. Nevertheless a fresh study by Professor Fohrer is no superfluity.[4] The author examines the narratives in which Elijah figures one by one, and then studies the extent of the historical kernel in the saga and the history of the times in which the prophet lived and the figure of the prophet. While he freely recognizes the accretions in the tradition, the figure of Elijah is not dissolved into legend in Professor Fohrer's hands. Instead he reaches the conclusion that as a prophetic figure Elijah was a veritable second Moses. In that judgment the recognition of the historical figure of Moses and of his prophetic stature is implied. The present writer agrees that it is unlikely that either Moses or Elijah was created by tradition out of nothing, and with Professor Fohrer finds a substantial historical basis behind the tradition.

H. H. ROWLEY

Manchester

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[1] *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*[2] [1956]. Mohr, Tübingen. DM 43; bound DM 48.80.

[2] *De Structuur van de Henoch-traditie en het Nieuwe Testament* [1955]. Kemink en Zoon, Utrecht. Fl. 10.

[3] *Babylone et l'Ancien Testament* [1956]. Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchatel and Paris; Swiss Fr. 6·25.

[4] *Elia* (*Abhandlungen zur Theologie des A. und N. Testaments*, No. 31) [1957]. Zwingli Verlag, Basel; Swiss Fr. 12·45.

Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of God

By Professor J. K. S. Reid, D.D., Leeds

How does one do justice in a brief notice to a book of six hundred and ninety-nine pages—and of such pages as are contained in *Church Dogmatics*, vol. II, part 1, by Karl Barth ? [1] The present writer does not know whether there is an answer to the question ; he certainly does not profess to know it. He can only attempt two things. The first is to mention that, in this volume too, certain familiar key conceptions recur as *Leitmotive*. Chief among these is that '*God is known only by God*' (179) ; 'the fact that we know God is His work and not ours' (40). 'We cannot ourselves apprehend Him' ; but our views, conceptions and speech are 'put in service' by Him and so 'become true' (194). This means that we know Him as *One who acts on us*. He is *actus purus*, to which 'must be added *et singularis*' (264). This enables Barth to define God's being as 'being in person,' 'always an I' (208) ; and grace as 'an inner being and conduct of God' (353). Again Barth's thought is dominated by the concept of the *Trinity*. God 'is present to Himself, and can therefore be present to another' (463). Specially characteristic of this *actus singularis* is *freedom*, Barth's term for the *aseitas Dei* of the Early Church. Applied, for example, to the 'perfection' of omnipresence, this means that God is not at the beck and call of any who want Him ; but He 'can be present to another . . . in that He grants co-existence' (463). Lastly, this volume of the *Dogmatics* also is *Christologically* conceived. For example, if we may speak of 'man's readiness for God,' it is because 'God is man. . . . In (Jesus Christ) the fact that God is known is true not only for God Himself . . . but for man' (151). And with reference to the perfection of eternity : 'He was not only able to have and give time as the Creator, but in Jesus Christ He was able Himself to be temporal. If we say that God's eternity excluded this possibility, we are not speaking of the eternity which He has revealed to us and therefore not of God's real eternity' (617).

[1] This is the latest volume (55s. net) in the great English translation of Barth's *Dogmatics* which Messrs. T. and T. Clark are publishing. The translation by the Rev. T. H. L. Parker, the Rev. W. B. Johnston, Dr. Harold Knight and Professor J. L. M. Haire is excellent.

Secondly, it seems worth while to deal in greater detail with a single portion of the work under review. A number of considerations really dictate that the choice should fall upon the part containing Barth's dismissal of 'natural theology.' The matter is controversial ; it is notoriously 'Barthian' ; it is central to the thesis of the whole ; and Barth himself recognizes its 'vitality' (97), and says that apparently 'it must continually arise again' (85). The appearance of this volume in English will no doubt be the occasion for a fresh examination of the problem and of Barth's treatment of it.

Barth sets out four arguments in support of natural theology and demolishes them. (i) 'The establishment of our knowledge of God in this way is in fact possible and practicable' (85). It exists as an attempt with which natural man is permanently occupied, and the attempt is attended with success. But in fact the attempt is perverse, since it is occupied with no more than knowledge of a false god. (86). 'In none of its forms are the achievements of natural theology so imposing that they compel us to state that God, the real God, is naturally known' (87).

(ii) The second argument consists in the evident and urgent desirability and necessity of the hypothesis, in that it provides nothing more or less than a common basis of conversation between the Church and the world (88). The supposition of a certain natural knowability of God is the opening move in a game to be played with natural man, before he is placed before the actual decision itself (88 f.). The teachers have to come down to the child's level (90). Barth contests the value of this approach. This is to 'go to meet the natural man in a mask,' and the attempt cannot eventually escape the charge of insincerity and duplicity (92, 94). Pedagogically, the natural man 'is better served if no use is made of natural theology at all' (97).

(iii) It is further alleged that Scripture itself gives evidence of 'knowability of God independent of His revelation' (99). Barth deals very faithfully with this consideration. Initially it does look as if Ps 19^{1-6} suggests such an independent source for knowledge of God, and that St. Paul, as reported in Ac 17^{22-28}, allows that the Athenians, with their religiosity and their altar 'to the unknown God,'

stand in ' an independently assured relationship to God apart from Jesus Christ, and were to be addressed on the relationship as such ' (104). Is this then to be regarded as at least an independent ' side-line ' within the Biblical witness ? Barth answers with a denial : the earlier verses of Ps 19 must be off-set by *vv.* 7–14, and St. Paul's sermon on the Areopagus ends with a triumphant declaration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is not ' to any sort of godhead which is or may be open to a man in the cosmos as such,' but ' only to the God of Israel, *i.e.*, the God who acts towards and in Israel and reveals Himself in this action ' (107) that the Bible really witnesses. Passages having an apparently different tone are to be interpreted in this light. ' The Biblical witness points to God in His revelation and in this way only, and not otherwise, to the God existing in Himself ' (109). When Scripture refers to man in the cosmos, ' the reference is through everything that he is in his self-understanding to his being in the good-pleasure of God. It is through his own present to Jesus Christ as his future ' (116).

(iv) Finally, does not the readiness of God to be known imply a certain readiness of man ? To this question, and its negative answering, Barth devotes a whole section. The general reply is soon given (128) : ' With and in the fact that God is ready within Himself to be known by man, man is also ready to know Him. . . . Man's readiness to know God is compassed and established, delimited and determined by the readiness of God ; it is not independent but mediated—subsequent to the readiness of God, called by it out of nothingness into being.' In more detail, man's readiness or openness implies a need on man's part for a miracle of grace, a knowledge of this need and of the reality of God's grace to supply it, and a willingness to accept God's grace (130 f.). The clear testimony of Scripture, Barth goes on, is that man is ' closed to the readiness of God, shut up under disobedience ' (133). In these circumstances, natural theology can work only mischief : ' the core of this theology is that for [man] the truth can be had without the truth itself, because he himself is the truth itself, or ar any rate he is also the truth itself, in independence of the truth of God ' (135 f.). And if natural theology permits revelation alongside itself, it accepts it as something ' absorbed and domesticated ' (140) ' of which [man] is fundamentally the master ' (141). Its enmity to grace works out in neutralizing grace. To say ' revelation *and* natural theology ' is to court disaster—a fact which in the Barmen Declaration the German Confessional Church plainly realized (172 ff.). There is, however, a man who is indeed open to God in His readiness : it is the man who is ' included in the readiness of God in Jesus Christ ' (150). ' Our flesh is therefore present when He knows God as the Son the Father, when God knows Himself. In our flesh God knows Himself ' (151).

An argument of such length and texture cannot be disposed of briefly. Sympathizers will want to see it tested thoroughly ; those with different feelings towards it will at least do it the justice of careful scrutiny. Here let two comments be thrown into the arena in which the discussion freshly provoked by the appearance of this volume will take place. (*a*) Is it possible that there is a confusion in what is said between ' knowledge of God from another source ' and ' knowledge of a false god ' ? The argument in (ii) and (iii) seems to depend on some kind of presumed identity between the two : it is certainly insincere to go to the unbeliever with a mere pretence that the conversation concerns some common thing accepted on different grounds ; and whatever St. Paul exactly meant in referring to the Athenians as δεισιδαιμονεστέρους, he certainly does not make use of a witness to quite another god than the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And in the case of (i), it looks as if an identity of this kind constitutes rather a premise than a conclusion of the argument.

(*b*) Further, concerning the question whether the only source of true knowledge of God is Jesus Christ, has not the issue to be framed in more complex terms if its significance is to be understood ? Christ has done something universal and cosmic which affects all men—this is one of the great and repeated affirmations of Barth's theology. Since He is the appointed expression of God, nothing can be true of God that does not reflect what Christ says of God or that does not have Christ as its source. What then of the ' religions ' ? Are they or are they not related to the fact of Christ's universal applicability ? And again, supposing it can be established as a philosophical view better grounded than its contradictory, that the world we know bears the marks of incompleteness, is this or is this not related to the fact of Christ's universal sufficiency ? If an affirmative answer is given to the first question, the consequent view of the ' religions ' is that they witness to man's perversity, his fall away from God, his consequent misunderstanding of God, and his inability either to get rid of God or by this road to return to Him. If the second question be also answered affirmatively, it may apologetically be affirmed that the place which philosophy perceives to be empty but cannot fill belongs by right to the God and Father of Jesus Christ.

Entre Nous

Adventurer for Christ

Getting on for forty years ago now my father gave me a book called, I think, 'Notable Voyagers.' I cannot remember the author's name, but to this day I can remember the thrill of reading the stories of Vasco da Gama, Dampier, Captain Cook, Amundsen and the rest. The thrill of these stories came back at the reading of *Archibald the Arctic*, by Archibald Lang Fleming (Hodder and Stoughton; 25s. net). Archibald Lang Fleming, a Scot from Greenock, was the first Bishop of the Arctic with a diocese of 1,204,697 square miles, and in this book he has given us what is undoubtedly one of the great missionary autobiographies of all time.

Where does chance end and God step in? Dr. Fleming was brought up in a Christian home. When he was a lad in 1894 his thoughts were much in Africa. On Sunday evenings there was usually read to him a true missionary story; but in that year his sister came back from a visit to Dundee with the story of how she had heard a talk from Shouldlo, a Christian Eskimo, who told of a lonely land of snow and ice and sledges, where there was only one missionary of Christ. 'That night,' says the Bishop, 'I asked God to bless the Eskimo and help me to be a missionary to them when I grew up.' The family left Greenock and went to Hunter's Quay. They were staunch Presbyterians; they attended the Church of Scotland at Sandbank, but it was too far to walk there for Sunday School, and so the lad went to the Scottish Episcopal Sunday School in Hunter's Quay, and was on the way to becoming an Anglican. When he grew up he entered the famous ship-building firm of John Brown's in Clydebank, and he would undoubtedly have had a brilliant career as a naval architect, for he had a hand in the building of the *Lusitania*. But one morning, in the train on the way to work, a friend tossed him a copy of 'The Life of Faith' in which there was an appeal from the Bishop of Moosonee for a missionary to the Eskimo of Baffin Land—and the old dream was on the way to becoming a fact. It looks like a series of chances—or it looks like the hand of God.

So to the far north Archibald Lang Fleming went. What an epic the story is! By boat and sledge and aeroplane he went on journeys which were often very near to death. Sometimes supplies nearly gave out. 'Slowly but with fearful certainty we were all faced with the most horrible of spectres; slow death from hunger and cold. I now learned for the first time, but not the last, that one of the terrors of life for the Eskimo is this omnipresent menace of starvation.' Of another journey he writes: 'My lips became cracked and bleeding with the cold. Driving ice particles stung my face like slugs from a shotgun. My breath froze on my moustache and clogged both mouth and nostrils. . . . I coughed incessantly because the chill air tortured my lungs.'

As the years went on he learned Eskimo and became one with the people. He recalls as the greatest honour that ever came to him the night, after evening prayer, when the Eskimo told him that he was no longer to be called 'the young teacher,' but In-nook-tah-kaub, which means 'One of the family.' 'Before you came,' said one hunter to him, 'the road was dark and we were afraid. Now we are not afraid, for the darkness has gone away and all is light as we walk the Jesus way.'

There are things which bring us very near the Early Church. The Bishop talks of the problem of the baptism of children: 'I came to understand the necessity for the children to be baptized and received into the family of God. The children of Christian parents were either members of Christ's family or they were not. Christian or pagan—which? There was no neutral ground. So thereafter when I baptized the father and mother of a family I baptized their children too.' Is that not the very picture of how infant baptism began?

There is a lovely picture of the Bishop seeking to explain the doctrine of the Trinity by the form, the colour and the smell of a flower. There are glimpses of how, indeed, Christ makes all things new. The Bishop asked a woman the meaning of tattooing on her face and wrists, a custom which was part of the pagan ritual. 'I am as one,' she answered, 'who has forgotten.'

Bishop Fleming died before this book was published, for he bore in his body the marks of his Arctic odysseys. He tells the story of an old blind Eskimo. 'He then went on to say that because he was an old man he knew that he must soon die, but he was not afraid, since his spirit would go to be with Jesus; with Him he would have new eyes and would be able to see the prophets and other believers. Then, with a smile he added: "And you also, you will become an old man, and you will die and be with Jesus and I will look out for you and together we will serve Him in the beyond."' And beyond a doubt the faith of the old blind Eskimo came true.

At the very end of his book the Bishop wrote the two Latin words 'Laus Deo'; and indeed we praise God for a life like this, a life whose simple and radiant faith shines through the printed word on every page of this great book. WILLIAM BARCLAY

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